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**BATTLE OF
ALGIERS**
ON 4K BLU-RAY

CAMBRAI

DAWN OF THE TANK AGE

PLUS:

- FV603 Saracen
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- The real MASH

**DID BRITAIN'S ARMoured TRIUMPH
TURN THE BLOODY TIDE OF WWI?**

ATHELSTAN

**CONQUESTS OF
ENGLAND'S FIRST KING**



**BATTLESHIP
YAMATO**

UNCOVER THE LAST STAND OF
JAPAN'S DOOMED FLAGSHIP



**BRUTAL BIRTH OF
BANGLADESH**

HOW POST-INDEPENDENCE TURMOIL
SPARKED A VICIOUS GUERRILLA WAR



**BOMBING
NORTH KOREA**

THE USA'S FORGOTTEN
TERROR MISSIONS

Future

ISSUE 048

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WORLD OF WARSHIPS

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LET'S BATTLE

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Welcome

“What the elephants of Carthage were to the legions of Rome, so to a devastating degree were the English tank squadrons to the German troops – a tour de force of British military engineering”

– Leutnant Bernhard Hegermann, 84. Infanterie-Regiment

The Battle of Cambrai, fought 100 years ago this month, has long been held as a turning point in the history of battlefield technology – the first large-scale tank offensive. Yet, however impressive this milestone is historically, in the context of World War I the battle was far from a triumph.

This issue, John Taylor explores how the early British successes at Cambrai were brought about by the sturdy Mark IVs and how this turned into disaster in the face of a huge German counter-offensive.

The events of the 1917 campaign simultaneously show the great leaps and the limits of

these new military vehicles. Ironically their first opponents would be the ones to perfect armoured doctrine over two decades later.



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CONTRIBUTORS



TOM GARNER

For the third part of his Jadotville interview series Tom spoke with veteran Tony Dykes about the vicious fighting in the aftermath of the siege (page 54). He also spoke with Michael Wood about the conquests of King Æthelstan (page 46).



MIGUEL MIRANDA

Lifting the lid on murky post-colonial conflicts once again, this month Miguel explores the events that led Bangladesh into a bitter war for independence (page 84). He also provides a blow-by-blow account of the Battle of Algiers (page 62).



MARC DE SANTIS

It was one of the largest ships in the Pacific theatre of WWII, but the final battle of the Japanese flagship Yamato was anything but glorious. Over on page 70 Marc explores the dramatic events that led the battleship to its final stand.

www.historyanswers.co.uk

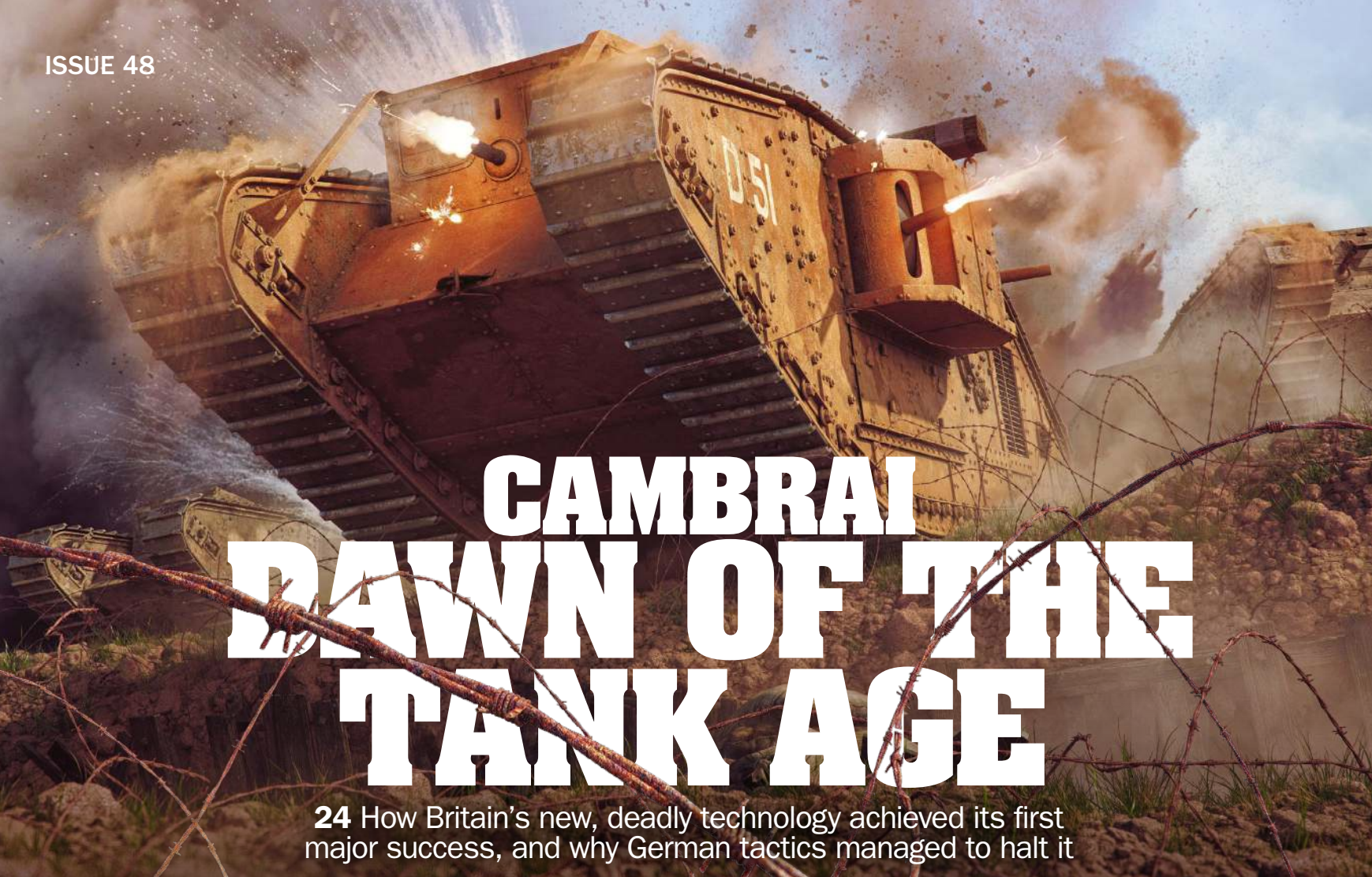
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The British introduction of the tank in WWI meant that nowhere on the front could be considered safe. Pictured are tanks carrying 'fascines' to cross enemy trenches, 1918

Image: Alamy



CAMBRAI DAWN OF THE TANK AGE

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One of the most brutal conflicts in the wake of WWII saw a country bitterly divided

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UN troops faced disaster after a sudden and massive encirclement by Chinese forces

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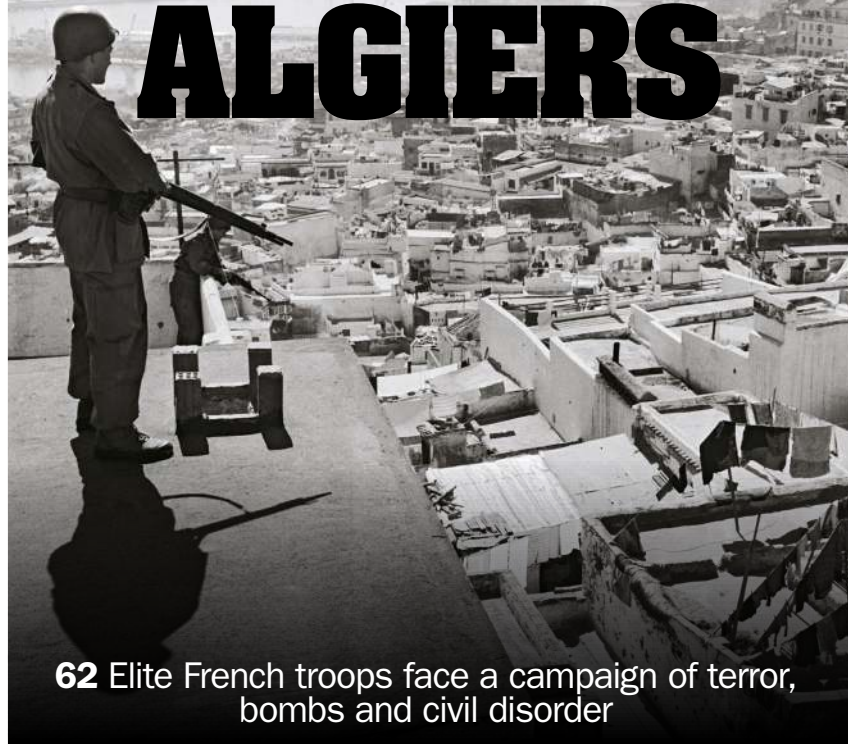
Seasoned generals and wily politicians clashed on the battlefield and across the negotiating table

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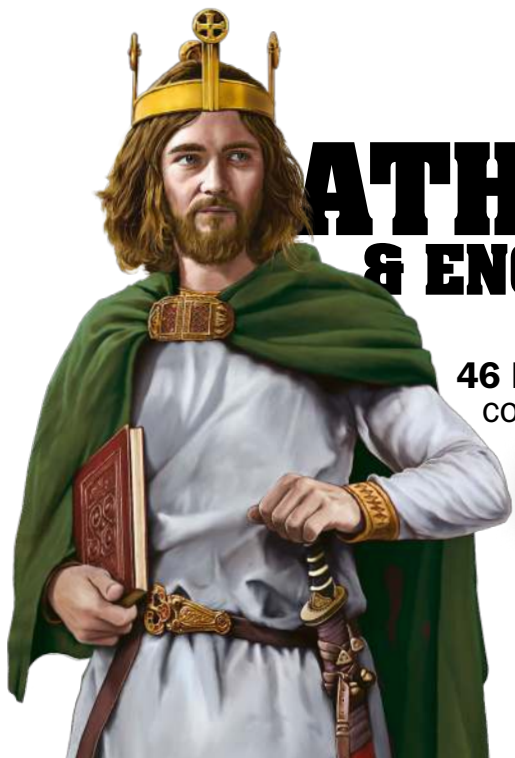
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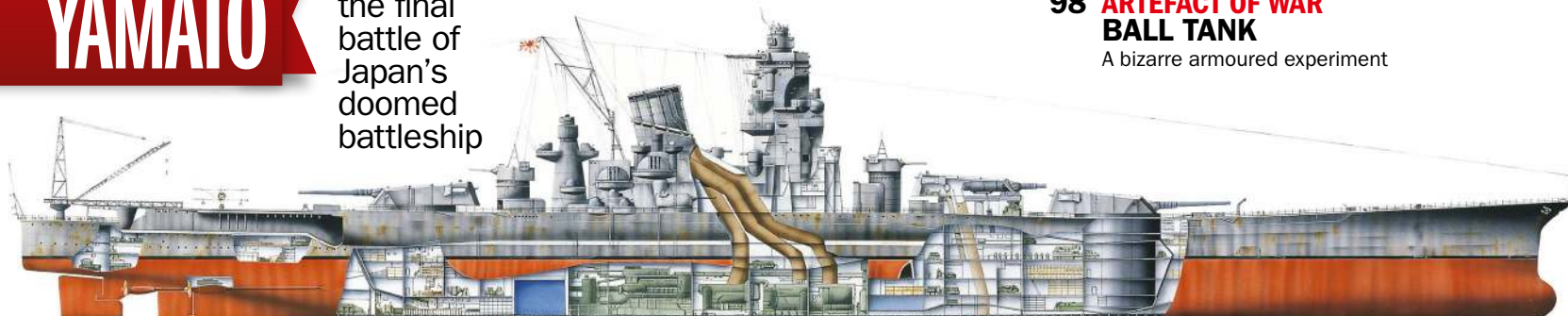


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BALL TANK
A bizarre armoured experiment





WARⁱⁿ FOCUS

HARRIER CARGO

Taken: c. June 1975

A Hawker Siddeley Harrier jump jet sits under a camouflaged canopy at its base in Belize with its full armament on display. In response to the ongoing civil war in neighbouring Guatemala in the mid-20th century, British jets were deployed to the former colony to deter any incursions, and remained until the mid-1990s.

WAR_{in} **FOCUS**

TRACKS TO WAR


Taken: c. 1930s

Anarchist CNT/FAI (National Confederation of Labour and Iberian Anarchist Federation) militia pose for a photograph in Barcelona during the early years of the Spanish Civil War. The Catalanian capital was a major stronghold for Republican forces and was severely bombed in spring 1938. It finally fell in January 1939 after a major Nationalist offensive.









WAR_{in} **FOCUS** **FIRE AND ICE**

Taken: 25 January 2000

Russian Federation soldiers open fire on the outskirts of Grozny, the capital of the Chechen Republic, on the borders of Azerbaijan and Georgia. Although the conflict between the disputed republic and Russia goes back centuries, the most recent outbreak came on the brink of the new millennium. Insurgents continue to fight to this day.

TIMELINE OF THE...

KOREAN WAR 1950-53

Partitioned in 1948, border clashes between Soviet-backed North Korea and US-backed South Korea were followed by a Northern invasion of the South, pitching the newly formed United Nations against communist powers



US Marines use landing craft during the Inchon landings, which relieved pressure on the Pusan Perimeter

INCHON LANDINGS

General MacArthur orders an amphibious invasion of the port city of Inchon while UN forces are besieged in the extreme south east of the peninsula. Two weeks later the pro-American regime of Syngman Rhee is restored in Seoul.

25 June 1950

INVASION OF SOUTH KOREA

Armed and trained by the Soviets, the armies of Kim il-Sung storm across the 38th parallel of latitude. Within one day North Korean tanks reach the suburbs of the South Korean capital, Seoul.



A North Korean plaque from 1950, which was hung on doors. It has phrases such as "Victory is assured!"

27 June 1950

WASHINGTON RESPONDS

President Truman orders US air and sea forces to give support to the forces of Syngman Rhee's Republic of Korea. The UN Security Council calls on member nations to provide support in repelling the North's invasion.



US naval forces move from their base in Japan to the Korean peninsula

15 September 1950

NORTHERN PUSH

American forces, having crossed the 38th parallel, occupy the northern capital of Pyongyang. MacArthur orders a drive towards the Yalu River that divides China from Korea. North Korean armies retreat north.

An American army train arrives in Seoul, having crossed the recently re-built bridge over the Han River



19 October 1950



“THE LAST CHINESE TROOPS HEAD NORTH IN 1958, BUT US TROOPS REMAIN IN SOUTH KOREA. THE TWO KOREAS REMAIN AT WAR TODAY”

Right: General Ridgway and General MacArthur exchange looks



MACARTHUR IS DISMISSED

In response to his numerous public statements contradicting the administration's policies regarding war with China and the use of atomic weapons, President Harry Truman dismisses MacArthur and replaces him with General Matthew B. Ridgway.

COMMUNIST COUNTER-OFFENSIVES

As Ridgway's forces hold the line below the parallel, two Chinese offensives fail to reach Seoul. Peace talks begin in the North Korean city of Kaesong in July.



High-ranking US and UN military officers pose for photos during peace negotiations

25 October 1950 11 April 1951 April-May 1951 27 July 1953



CHINESE INTERVENTION

South Korean troops are decimated by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) of China at Pukchin. One week later the first American and Chinese clash occurs at Unsan, and there are aerial clashes over the Yalu River.

Chinese soldiers watch from one of the many bunkers dug during the Korean War



ARMISTICE BUT NOT PEACE

An armistice signed in the village of Panmunjom allows for prisoner exchanges and the cessation of armed operations. The last Chinese troops head north in 1958, but US troops remain in South Korea. The two Koreas remain at war today.

UN guards outside the building where the armistice was signed on 27 July 1953

Images: Alamy, Getty

PENINSULA CONFLICT

Archaic trenches, blonde bombshells, jet fighters, WWII artillery, celebrity comedians and some of the most devastating battles of the 20th century



M-1 CARBINE

UNITED STATES 1942-73

The most produced infantry arm of World War II, this semi-automatic carbine was widely used by American and UN forces until the end of hostilities.

MINESWEEPERS

UNITED STATES, UNITED NATIONS 1950-53

The United States lost five vessels during patrols along the Korean coast. Some skirmishes with North Korean vessels took place in the first weeks of the war but the main danger was from mines and coastal artillery.

PSYCH OPS

UNITED STATES, NORTH KOREA, CHINA 1950-53

Both sides air-dropped propaganda leaflets from aircraft across enemy territory with illustrated propaganda in an attempt to demoralise each other.

DEFECTORS

UNITED STATES/UNITED KINGDOM 1953-C.1980

One British and 20 American POWs refused repatriation via the border town of Panmunjom. Most returned to the West by the early 1960s.

M-1 MORTAR

UNITED STATES C.1942-52

The 81mm (3.2in) artillery piece was in widespread use until mid-1952, when the longer range M-79 mortar replaced it.

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

UNITED STATES 1947-

Based in Seoul, the CIA sent hundreds of expatriate North Koreans across the DMZ, but operations were often sabotaged by double agents.

“NAPALM EXPLODED RAPIDLY AND INFLECTED DREADFUL BURNS. AMERICAN FORCES USED IT EXTENSIVELY IN THE IRON TRIANGLE NORTH OF SEOUL”

NAPALM

UNITED STATES 1944-1980

(BANNED BY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION)

An incendiary weapon made from gelling agents and fuel, napalm exploded rapidly and inflicted dreadful burns. American forces used it extensively in the Iron Triangle north of Seoul.

MARILYN GOES ON TOUR

USA 1954

Marilyn Monroe, the icon of the big screen, toured Korea in January 1954 after the official armistice the previous year, performing at ten shows.

Marilyn Monroe performed in front of thousands of cheering American soldiers



GLOSTER METEOR

UNITED KINGDOM 1943-1980S

Designed by Sir Frank Whittle during World War II, the first British jet was used by the Royal Air Force and Royal Australian Air Force in the skies over Korea.



The Gloster Meteor was the only Allied jet to see combat in WWII and was deployed to Korea during the Korean War

1 BATTLE OF OSAN
5 JULY 1950

Equipped with superior Soviet tanks and artillery, the North Korean army storms south and overruns Task Force Smith, a force of 400 US Infantry.

2 PUSAN PERIMETER
4 AUGUST-18 SEPTEMBER 1950

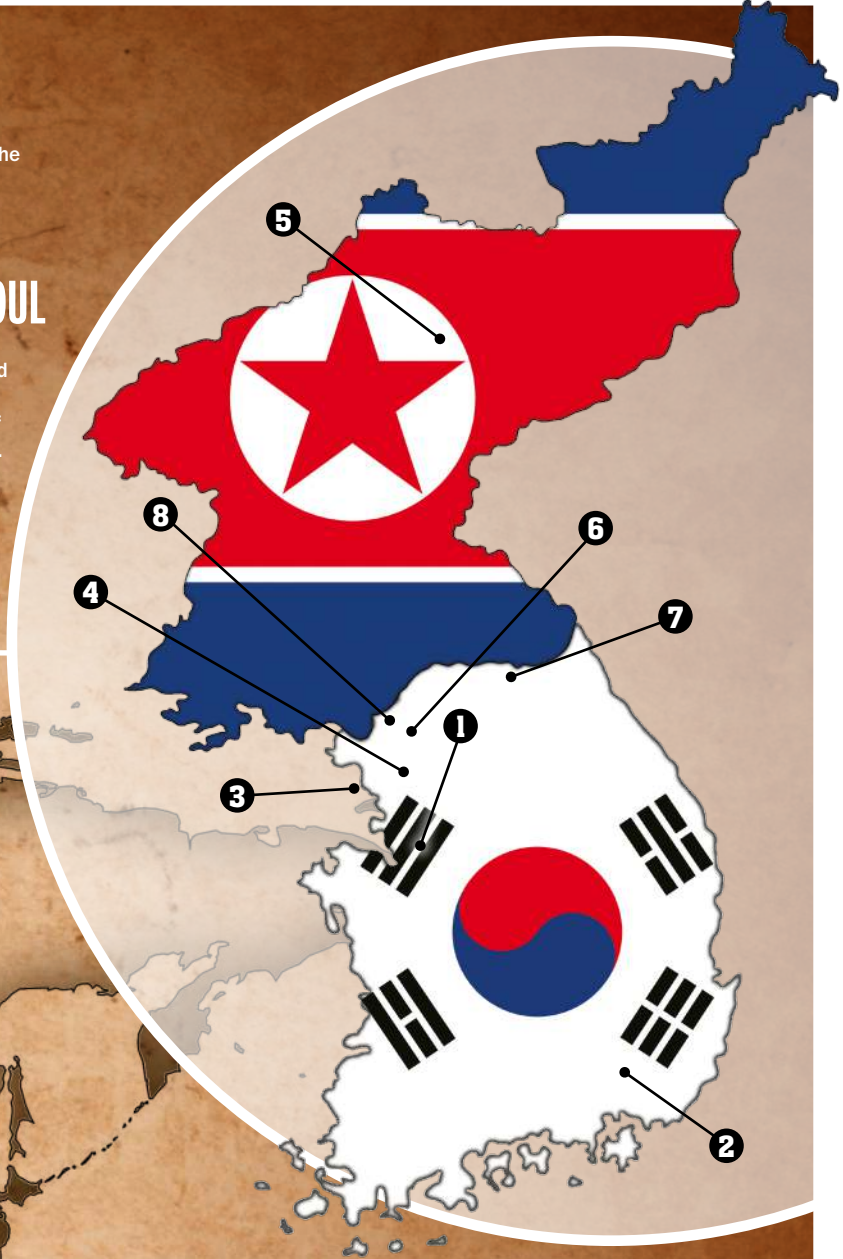
A newly arrived UN taskforce battles the North Koreans along a 230-kilometre (143-mile) defensive line.

3 INCHON LANDINGS
15-19 SEPTEMBER 1950

Code-named Operation Chromite, an amphibious assault on the port by the US Marine Corps and X Corps of the army cuts North Korean lines.

4 2ND BATTLE OF SEOUL
22-25 SEPTEMBER 1950

The South Korean capital is recaptured from the North Koreans after bloody house-to-house fighting. Massacres of civilians by South Korean forces occur.



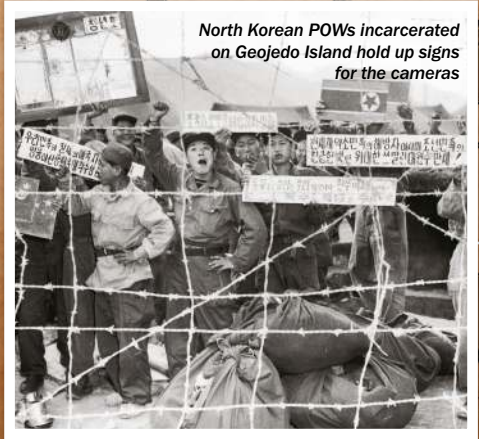
MIKOYAN-GUREVICH (MIG-15)
USSR 1949-1953
Chinese MiG-15 fighters first appeared over the Yalu River on 1 November 1950, replacing North Korean propeller aircraft. They battled the American F-86 Sabres throughout the war.

T-34 TANKS
USSR C.1940-1951
A full brigade of North Korean T-34 tanks formed part of the original incursion across the DMZ in June 1950. Most North Korean tanks had been destroyed by early 1951.

TRENCH WARFARE
UNITED NATIONS, NORTH KOREA, CHINA
1950-53
Both sides regularly dug in ahead of the advancing enemy in the early battles, but dugouts and trenches became widespread after May 1951 with the war in stalemate.

“DUGOUTS AND TRENCHES BECAME WIDESPREAD AFTER MAY 1951 WITH THE WAR IN STALEMATE”

BIO WARFARE?
SOUTH KOREA (CHINESE/NORTH KOREA ALLEGATIONS) 1952
An outbreak of cholera near Incheon was attributed by China to the UN forces, an allegation strenuously denied. The North Koreans continue to allege that disease-bearing insects were air dropped north of the DMZ after 1952.



North Korean POWs incarcerated on Geojedo Island hold up signs for the cameras

GEOJEDO ISLAND CAMP
SOUTH KOREA
A prison camp designated mainly for North Korean POWs, the camp held 170,000 prisoners by early 1952. Uprisings in February and April that year killed dozens before being suppressed.

5 CHOSIN BREAKOUT
27 NOVEMBER-13 DECEMBER 1950
China enters the war and clashes with X Corps and US Marines, who manage to break out of a Chinese encirclement and push east to Hungnam Harbour.

6 BATTLE OF KAPYONG
22-25 APRIL 1951
A combined Australian, New Zealand and Canadian force arrests a spring drive by the Chinese and establish a bridgehead to facilitate capturing Seoul.

7 BATTLE OF HEARTBREAK RIDGE
SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1951
A failed offensive by the Chinese and North Koreans to establish control of hill terrain just below the 38th parallel.

8 PANMUNJOM ARMISTICE
27 JULY 1953
An arrangement is made for an armistice but not a permanent peace. This ends major fighting on the peninsula after three years of bloody war.



THE CHOSIN RESERVOIR BREAKOUT

A UN taskforce faced annihilation after a sudden and massive encirclement by Chinese troops in the freezing mountains of North Korea

Located in North Korea's South Hamgyong Province, the Changjin Reservoir had been renamed the Chosin Reservoir by the Japanese. The 'Frozen Chosin' became the setting for a remorseless siege and breakout during the winter of 1950, when the US Army's X Corps and US Marines faced the full might of the Chinese People's Volunteer Army (PVA), sent into Korea on the orders of Chairman Mao.

The PVA's Ninth Army Group was led by General Song Shi-Lun and was comprised of around 120,000 troops. Facing them was a force of around 30,000 UN troops comprised of American, South Korean and British forces, with General Edward Almond in charge of X Corps while General Oliver Smith commanded First Marine Division.

Following the Inchon landings, North Korea's armies had been cut in half: after weeks of siege, the US Eighth Army was able to break out of the Pusan Perimeter in south east Korea. The North Koreans fell back as X Corps and Eighth Army marched north towards the Yalu River, which forms the Chinese-North Korean border.

By late October 1950 Mao's forces were about to intervene on the side of North Korea. The PVA would rely on tactics that had served them well during the civil war against China's Nationalists: human wave attacks, ambushes and rapid mobility. Although the UN march north was thrown into reverse, the Chosin campaign was a pyrrhic victory for the Chinese. The PVA had 50,000 casualties to 17,000 UN casualties, and the Chinese Ninth Army was crippled, not returning to battle for

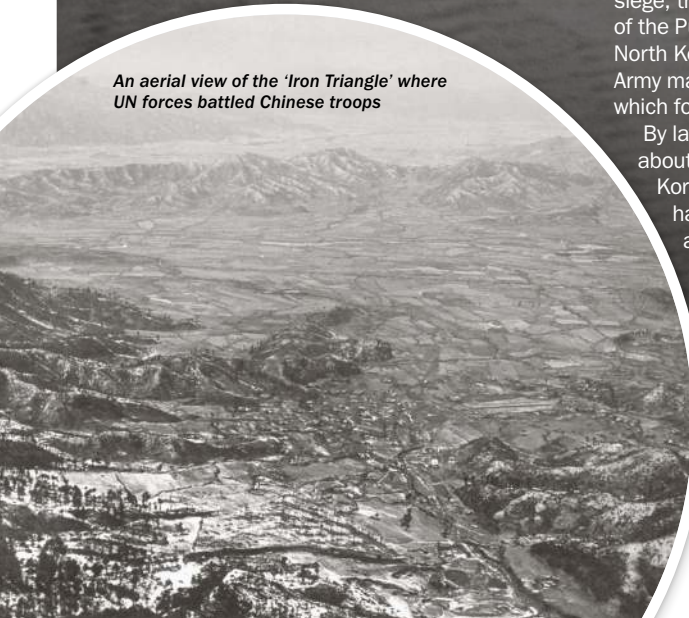
nearly two years. Thereafter, the original UN objective of a unified non-communist Korea was abandoned in favour of defending South Korea against a renewed communist occupation.

Prior to the battle, the UN supreme commander Douglas MacArthur anticipated ending the Korean War by Christmas. With Eighth Army moving towards the Yalu River and clashes taking place, a plan was formed to position X Corps around the reservoir, north of and behind the PVA as it moved to face Eighth Army.

But PVA's Ninth Army attacked at four points. They laid siege to the First Division at the villages of Yudam-ni, Hagaru-ri and Koto-ri, but the marines held out for three days. East of the reservoir, however, a US-South Korean contingent called 'Taskforce McLean' was overrun, with just a few hundred survivors making it to Hagaru-ri, some crossing the ice of the reservoir.

On 29 November MacArthur decreed that Almond and Smith's forces needed to break out and make a 78-mile (125 kilometre) trek to the port city of Hungnam on the east coast. Backed up by massive airstrikes, the breakout commenced 6 December with US marines fighting their way from Yudam-ni and Hagaru-ri to reunite at Koto-ri. The fighting took place in temperatures that approached minus 40

An aerial view of the 'Iron Triangle' where UN forces battled Chinese troops





UN troops returning from the Kumwha River, which was a major focal point in the battles for the 'Iron Triangle' during a period of military stalemate

“THE FIGHTING TOOK PLACE IN TEMPERATURES THAT APPROACHED MINUS 40 DEGREES FAHRENHEIT, AND X CORPS RECORDED 7,338 CASES OF FROSTBITE”

degrees Celsius, and X Corps recorded 7,338 cases of frostbite. The soil was so hard that the construction of dugouts was only possible with dynamite. Moreover, in places the mountain passes were only wide enough for a single vehicle to pass. At the village of Koto-ri the troops discovered that the PVA had blown up the bridge over the crucial Funchilin Pass. The US Air Force was able to parachute-drop eight portable bridge sections to allow for a temporary working bridge to be assembled.

Thousands of Korean civilians accompanied X Corps and First Marines as they approached Hungnam. The UN forces reached the port city on 11 December, by which time the PVA had fallen back, having failed in the objective of surrounding and annihilating the enemy. An armada of 193 ships waited to evacuate the UN forces and 98,000 civilians. Within days, 'Operation Christmas Cargo' evacuated them en masse to South Korea. Chinese troops entered the city on Christmas Day.

With Eighth Army also in retreat further west, the UN would not return to North Korea. But the escape from Chosin had avoided a far greater rout. It was famously described by General Smith: "Retreat Hell! We're not retreating. We're just advancing in a different direction."

THE MASH UNITS

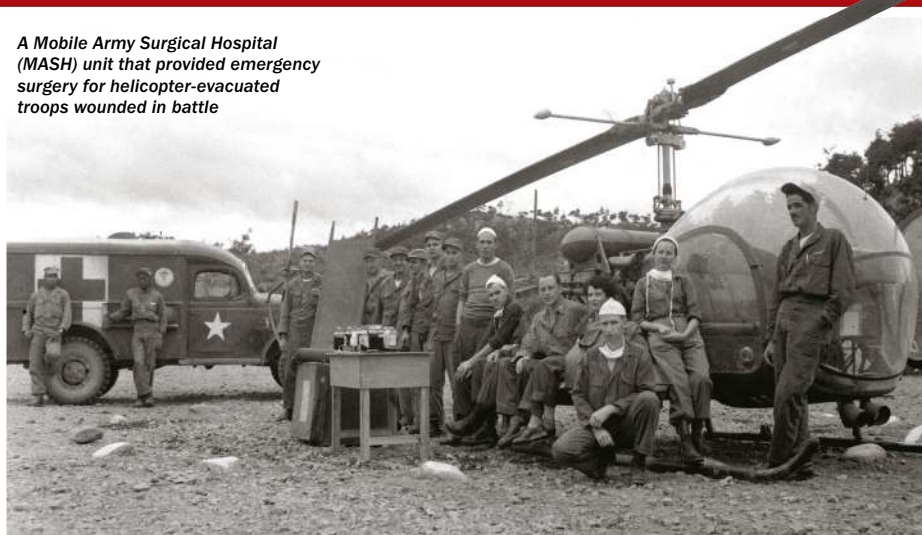
THE MOBILE ARMY SURGICAL HOSPITALS PROVIDED VITAL AND RAPID SUPPORT TO FRONTLINE TROOPS AND IMPROVED THE FATALITY RATE

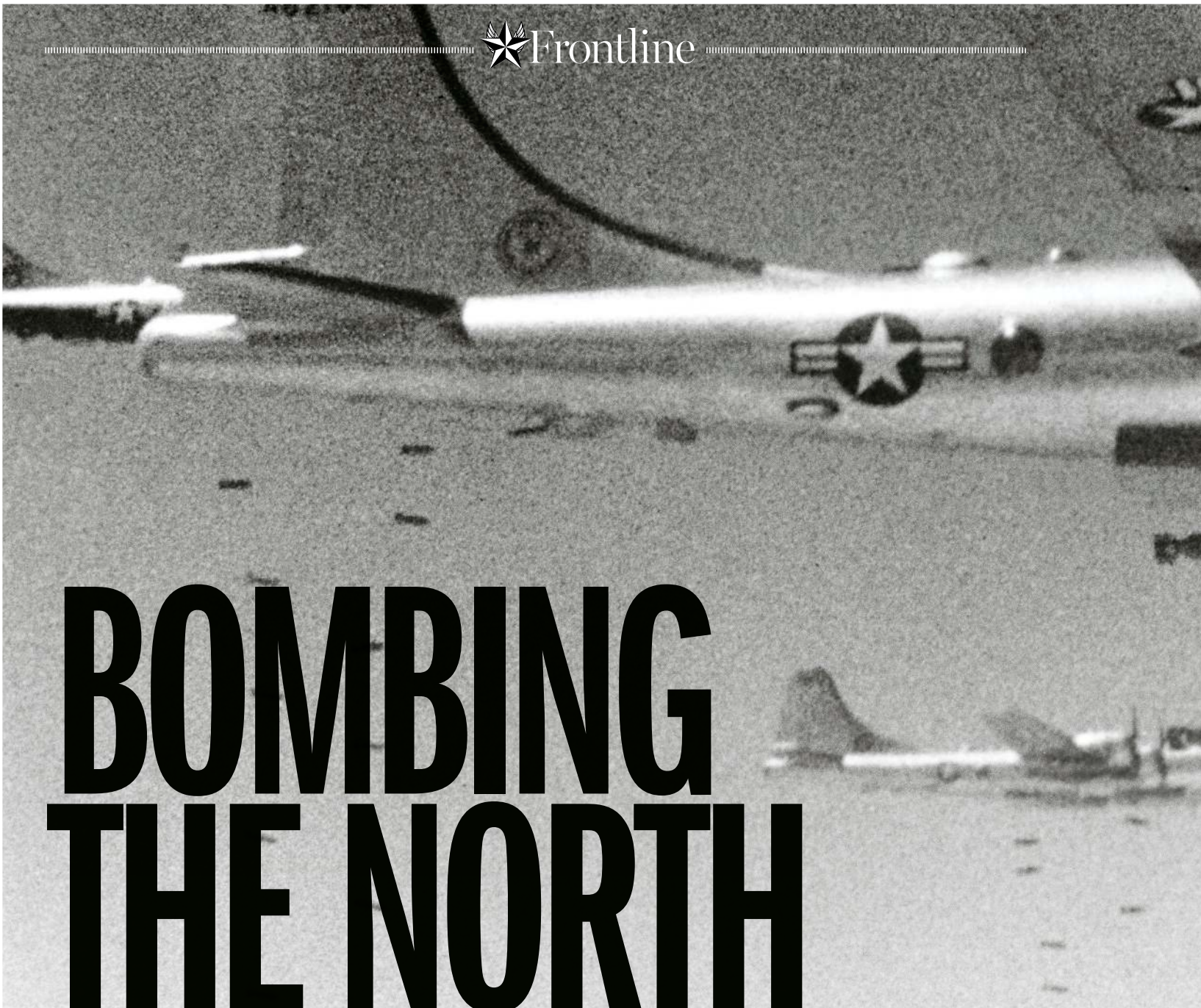
The Mobile Army Surgical Hospitals (MASH) inspired the 1970 hit movie of the same name, directed by Robert Altman, and a long-running sitcom. Both were based on the experiences of Richard Hornberger, who wrote a satirical novel about his experiences in Korea in 1968.

Seven MASH units operated in Korea at various stages of the war. The first was set up on 6 July 1950 in Pusan. The concept of a mobile field hospital had been established immediately after World War II on 23 August 1945. Each MASH unit was planned as a 60-bed truck-borne hospital that could be disassembled and moved at six hours' notice.

They typically operated around 20 miles (32 kilometres) behind the fighting and were served by four Bell H-13 helicopters. By Christmas 1950 there were four MASH units in Korea, sometimes serving 400 patients per day. Within a few months they had been enlarged to 200 beds and were augmented by 'Normash' – the Norwegians performing a non-combat role in the UN mission. Helicopter mobility along with superior surgical and post operative care paid off. The fatality rate for wounded American soldiers dropped from 4.5 per cent in World War II to 2.5 per cent in Korea.

A Mobile Army Surgical Hospital (MASH) unit that provided emergency surgery for helicopter-evacuated troops wounded in battle





BOMBING THE NORTH

The historic belligerence of the North Korean regime is at least partly explained by memories of a savage and remorseless bombing campaign, where the use of atomic weapons was considered

When the regime of Kim Jong-un issued threats against the United States territory of Guam in 2017, few observers noted that the first B-29 bombers that bombed Korean targets took off from Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, just a few days after Kim's grandfather sent his armies into the south in June 1950.

North Korea was devastated by the US Air Force campaign. The head of the Strategic Air Command (SAC), General Curtis LeMay, claimed that American bombing killed 20 per cent of the North's population and left not a single village unscathed. Western media seldom reported the bombings: accounts of the air war focused on the high-altitude duels

between Soviet-built MiG-15s and American F-86 jets in the so-called 'MiG Alley' near the Chinese border. Yet on 29 August 1952 the North's capital Pyongyang endured over 1,400 sorties in one night alone.

Initially the Supreme Commander of UN forces General Douglas MacArthur was under instructions to limit targets north of the 38th parallel dividing the Koreas, lest the Chinese or Soviets step up their aid to the North. The first B-29s, accompanied by P-51 Mustangs and Lockheed P-80 jets, were barely threatened by the North's propeller-driven Yakovlev and Sturmovik planes or by ground fire. Flying from the Japanese bases of Yokota and Kadena, they escorted UN forces north towards the Yalu River before the Chinese intervention.

After 200,000 Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) troops intervened on the side of the North in October, the scale of the bombings was vastly increased and included the use of incendiary devices. B-29 bombers typically carried 39,500-pound bomb loads with delayed action fuses and one magnesium flare designed to illuminate a target area for bombardiers bringing up the rear. Bombing missions by B-29s were augmented by Douglas B-26 Invaders flying at lower levels. As early as November, these missions had wreaked sufficient destruction for the North Korean leadership to instruct the population to build dug outs and underground schools. That same month MacArthur even sent two bomber groups, the 22nd and 92nd, back to the US.

B-29 Superfortresses were capable of carrying large payloads and travelling huge distances. They could also be modified to carry atomic weapons



“AS THE PLA ADVANCED SOUTH, TRUMAN GAVE A PRESS CONFERENCE AND STATED THAT HIS ADMINISTRATION WOULD CONSIDER ANY STEPS NECESSARY TO WIN IN KOREA, INCLUDING THE USE OF ATOMIC WEAPONS”

By 1951 the US Air Force had largely run out of urban targets and turned to irrigation and hydroelectric dams. These bombings would inflict another kind of misery: flooding farmland and causing starvation among an already brutalised population. In June 1953 American aircraft bombed the irrigation dams of the North's Toksan Reservoir, flooding villages and farms. Similar actions by the Nazis in the Netherlands in World War II had been considered a war crime.

For all the devastation wrought by conventional weaponry, the shadow of the atomic bomb loomed across the Korean battlefield. At the outset of the invasion, the United States had nearly 300 Mark-4 plutonium weapons in its stockpile, and while the Soviets had tested a similar weapon in 1949, it would be two years before they conducted a test drop. In July 1950 LeMay was ordered by President Harry Truman to move B-29s to England, to be capable of hitting Soviet targets. Weeks later the first of 20 nuclear-capable B-29s were sent to Guam. By November, as the PLA advanced south, Truman gave a press conference and stated that his administration would consider any steps necessary to win in Korea, including the use of atomic weapons.

In April 1951 he authorised nine devices to be transferred to atomic-capable B-29s at



A North Korean magnesium plant during a bombing raid by B-29s

Kadena Base, Okinawa. Although the SAC set up a command and control centre in Tokyo, the aircraft were removed by June. Nevertheless, the 'Hudson Harbour' operations took place in October – 'dummy run' missions against potential communist targets.

By this time the war was largely stalemated on the ground, but it is uncertain if the atomic option would have changed the course of the war. Communist forces were widely dispersed and relied on a primitive infrastructure, and the

destructive strength of the bombs available at the time was limited. But even without their use, the air war proved a calamity for Korea's civilian population. Like the bombing of German and Japanese cities a few years earlier, a key objective was destroying the enemy population's morale. Ultimately the North Korean state survived. Memories of the merciless nature of the aerial campaign have, in part, guided its leaders ever since, endangering the region even today.

— IN THE RANKS —

The war pitched UN troops into battle with communist forces across territory that was frozen in winter and baked in summer

PVA soldiers wearing the winter uniform of quilted cotton clothes and a fur-lined hat



PEOPLE'S VOLUNTEER ARMY (PVA) CHINA

Usually drawn from a rural background, or sometimes a Nationalist soldier incorporated from the recently ended civil war, the Chinese foot soldier was known for his endurance and ferocity.

At least 3 million soldiers from the People's Liberation Army (PLA) fought in Korea over three years as the People's Volunteer Army (PVA). To what extent these mostly poor and rural men were genuine volunteers is debatable, but PVA fighters impressed and terrified their enemies.

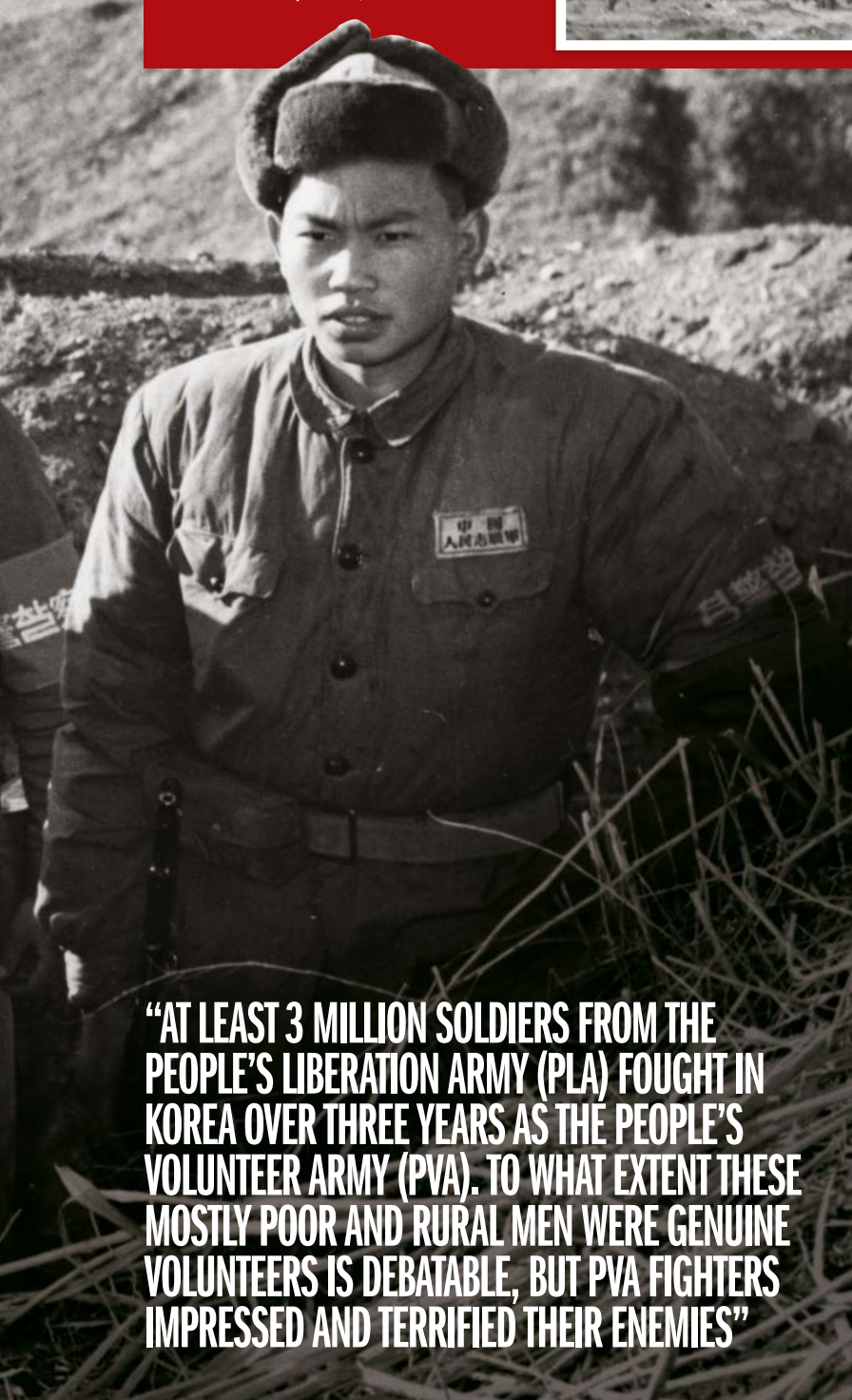
Often attacking at night in human wave assaults heralded by cries and bugles, they suffered dreadful casualties in the face of superior UN artillery and air power. At least 400,000 Chinese troops died either in combat or from exposure and disease. Among them was Mao Anying, the 28-year-old eldest son of the Chinese leader, who was killed in an air strike in November 1950.

The Chinese foot soldier wore a quilted cotton uniform in olive khaki during the winter months, topped by a fur-lined cap with flaps that were tied under the chin. Equipment usually included a waist belt with two or three stick grenades and bandoliers for ammunition and rice. His summer uniform consisted of a Russian-style tunic, trousers and an olive 'Mao' cap. Most early PVA volunteers carried bolt-action rifles or captured US weapons.

EIGHTH ARMY UNITED STATES

The United States entered the Korean War with much of its equipment stocks depleted, to the extent that troops typically fought with World War II era weapons and uniforms. Eighth Army was established within the Pusan Perimeter by General Walton 'Bulldog' Walker in July 1950. A typical NCO might have seen action in World War II, followed by a post-war stationing in Japan. He would wear a wartime M1943 uniform of windproof cotton sateen and a peaked field cap together with double-buckle combat boots. Weaponry included M-1 carbines.

Right: Eighth Army artillerymen in action in 1951. Their weapons and equipment, like the 155mm howitzers pictured, dated from WWII



“AT LEAST 3 MILLION SOLDIERS FROM THE PEOPLE’S LIBERATION ARMY (PLA) FOUGHT IN KOREA OVER THREE YEARS AS THE PEOPLE’S VOLUNTEER ARMY (PVA). TO WHAT EXTENT THESE MOSTLY POOR AND RURAL MEN WERE GENUINE VOLUNTEERS IS DEBATABLE, BUT PVA FIGHTERS IMPRESSED AND TERRIFIED THEIR ENEMIES”

GLOUCESTER REGIMENT UNITED KINGDOM

In August 1950 the Hong Kong-based 27th Brigade was dispatched to Korea, followed by the 29th Brigade in December. An infantry brigade consisted of headquarters, services and three rifle battalions and was 909 men strong. British troops were usually rotated every 12 months. The Gloucesters distinguished themselves on the Imjin River in April 1951, holding back a Chinese push south. Lieutenant Colonel J.P. Carne earned the Victoria Cross there, having commanded 700 troops against 11,000 PVA. He reportedly experienced attempted 'brainwashing' sessions while a POW.

The Gloucester Valley Battle Monument is a memorial to mark the regiment's actions in the Battle of Imjin River



ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT AUSTRALIA

At the outset of the war Liberal Prime Minister Robert Menzies committed Australian troops to Korea. 17,000 served there, and 339 were killed in action. In addition, around 1,000 Australian troops with prior military service were asked to re-enlist for three years of service, including one in Korea. The Third Battalion RAR had its first major engagement near Pyongyang in October 1950 and fought numerous battles along the 38th parallel. The RAR soldier was distinctive for his wide-brimmed 'Digger' hat, augmented later on by US flak jackets and field uniforms similar to other Commonwealth troops.

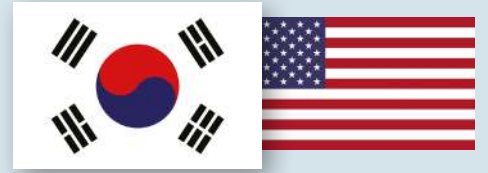


Distinctive Australian soldiers march through Sydney before deployment to Korea

Image: Alamy, Getty



LEADERS



Kim Il-Sung is still revered almost as a deity in North Korea, but his life has become lost in myth

KIM IL-SUNG DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA 12 APRIL 1912 - 8 JULY 1994

The life of the North Korean state's founding father is shrouded in myth. He is alternately vilified in South Korea as an evil dictator and adulated almost as a deity in the North.

Although the narrative of his early life is uncertain, it is known that he was born Kim Jong-su to a middle class, possibly Christian, family in Mangyongdae, today a suburb of Pyongyang. In 1920, with the Japanese in control of Korea, the family relocated to Manchuria, north east China, where he became interested in left-wing politics in his teens.

Having been imprisoned by China's Nationalist government in 1929, he joined the Communist Party of China in 1931 and soon took the alias of Kim Il-Sung (of the Sun), the name of a local folk hero. With Chinese training, he returned to Korea as an anti-Japanese partisan, leading several hundred men in guerrilla attacks. By 1940 he had escaped

the Japanese authorities and received political and military training at the Soviet party school in Khabarovsk in the Russian Far East. Stalin favoured Kim for leading the most loyal of Korea's communist factions, and he entered Pyongyang with the Red Army in October 1945.

Within three years the Korean Peninsula had been partitioned along the 38th parallel of latitude into a Soviet-backed North and anti-communist South. Border incursions by both regimes regularly took place. Kim attained Stalin's blessing for a strike against South Korea in early 1950 but the latter assumed the United States would not intervene militarily. China's leader Chairman Mao Zedong acquiesced to the action but did not intervene militarily until October 1950, as the American-led UN taskforce approached the Yalu River.

After the war ended, Kim Il-Sung conducted brutal purges of his ruling Korean Workers' Party, eliminating members considered too ideologically close to China or the Soviet Union. He also cultivated a personality cult to rival even those of Stalin and Mao.

GENERAL NAM IL DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA 5 JUNE 1915 - 7 MARCH 1976

The head of the North Korean delegation at the 1951-53 peace negotiations between UN and communist forces, he was born Yakov Petrovich Nam in the Russian Far East. Nam was relocated to Uzbekistan with his family and thousands of others during a forced resettlement ordered by Stalin in 1937.

An ethnic Korean, he worked as a teacher from 1941-43, but some accounts claim he fought against the Nazis with the Red Army. Selected by the Soviets to accompany Kim Il-Sung to Pyongyang, he worked in the North's Education Ministry after 1948 and was promoted to the Central Committee of the Worker's Party within two years. Soon after the Korean War he became Kim's foreign minister and was effectively vice premier during the 1960s. He was recorded as having perished in a traffic accident in 1976 and accorded a lavish funeral, although rumours persist that he was actually the victim of a purge.

"AN ETHNIC KOREAN, HE WORKED AS A TEACHER FROM 1941-3, BUT SOME ACCOUNTS CLAIM HE FOUGHT AGAINST THE NAZIS WITH THE RED ARMY"



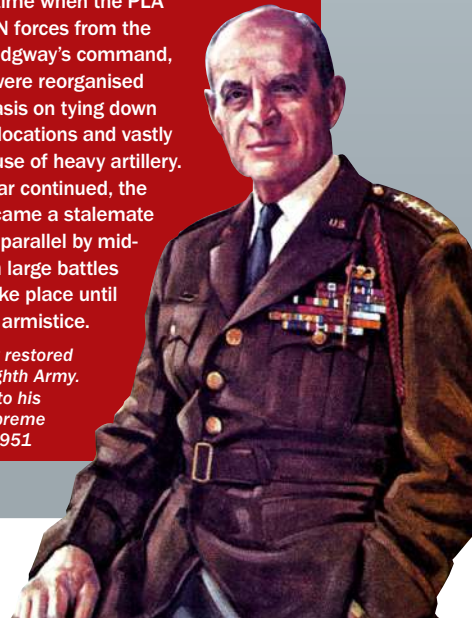
General Nam Il was a senior general in the North Korean army and a negotiator of the 1953 Panmunjom armistice

GENERAL MATTHEW BUNKER RIDGWAY UNITED STATES 3 MARCH 1895 - 26 JULY 1993

Distinguished by the trademark grenade he often wore attached to his webbing, Matthew Ridgway was a graduate of West Point and fought in World War I. In 1942 he was placed in charge of the newly formed 82nd Airborne Division and led campaigns in Italy and Normandy. In December 1950 Ridgway took over as commander of Eighth Army following the death of Lieutenant General Walton Walker in a jeep crash.

After President Truman dismissed MacArthur, Ridgway was placed in charge of the entire UN operation at a time when the PLA had expelled UN forces from the North. Under Ridgway's command, the UN forces were reorganised with the emphasis on tying down the PLA in key locations and vastly upgrading the use of heavy artillery. While the air war continued, the ground war became a stalemate along the 38th parallel by mid-1951, although large battles continued to take place until the Panmunjom armistice.

General Ridgway restored the morale of Eighth Army. The success led to his promotion to Supreme Commander in 1951



MARSHAL PENG DEHUI
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
24 OCTOBER 1898 - 29 NOVEMBER 1974

Regarded as one of the most senior generals in the People's Liberation Army (PLA), Peng was born from peasant stock in the south east Hunan province and became a manual labourer and foot soldier, joining the Nationalist Kuomintang Party in the 1920s. After a purge of the Nationalists' left faction in 1927, he soon turned to communism and became one of Mao's most senior generals, accompanying his forces on their 1934-5 'Long March' across China.

During the Korean War, he was given absolute authority over the PLA, answering only to Mao and his foreign minister Zhou Enlai. Marshal Peng was known to have misgivings about the PLA's lack of effective artillery and air support. He committed his troops to savage human wave attacks that incurred massive casualties. After the Korean War, Peng served as China's minister of national defence but his opposition to Mao's burgeoning personality cult and the disastrous 'Great Leap Forward' led to him being purged. He died in jail in 1974. He was officially rehabilitated after Mao's death.



Marshal Peng Dehuai was tasked by Chairman Mao with leading the PLA in North Korea

GENERAL DOUGLAS MACARTHUR
UNITED STATES
26 JANUARY 1880 - 5 APRIL 1964

Born in Little Rock, Arkansas, MacArthur graduated from West Point military academy and fought in World War I. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor he was placed in charge of US forces in the Pacific and oversaw the Japanese surrender in August 1945. Based in Tokyo, MacArthur was placed in charge of the American-led UN taskforce, assembled in the aftermath of the June 1950 North Korean invasion. In the early weeks of the war, UN forces were besieged by the Korean People's Army (KPA) on a scrap of territory around the city of Pusan.

Despite the reservations of the joint chiefs of staff, MacArthur conceptualised and led an audacious amphibious attack on the port city of Inchon, allowing for the recapture of Seoul and Eighth Army in Pusan to break out and march north. After the October 1950 intervention, MacArthur's public statements on the war became increasingly out of step with those of Washington, and he was relieved of his command the following April by President Harry Truman.

DR SYNGMAN RHEE
REPUBLIC OF KOREA
26 MARCH 1875 - 19 JULY 1965

Elected president in 1952, 1956 and 1960, South Korea's first premier was born in Hwanghae province in present-day North Korea. He was educated by Methodists and became fluent in English. His nationalist activities earned him a prison sentence in the early 1900s.

He emigrated to the United States soon after his release, and in 1910 he completed a PhD at

Princeton University – the first Korean to do so. Rhee moved to Hawaii in 1925 and spent the next two decades lobbying Washington to recognise Korean independence.

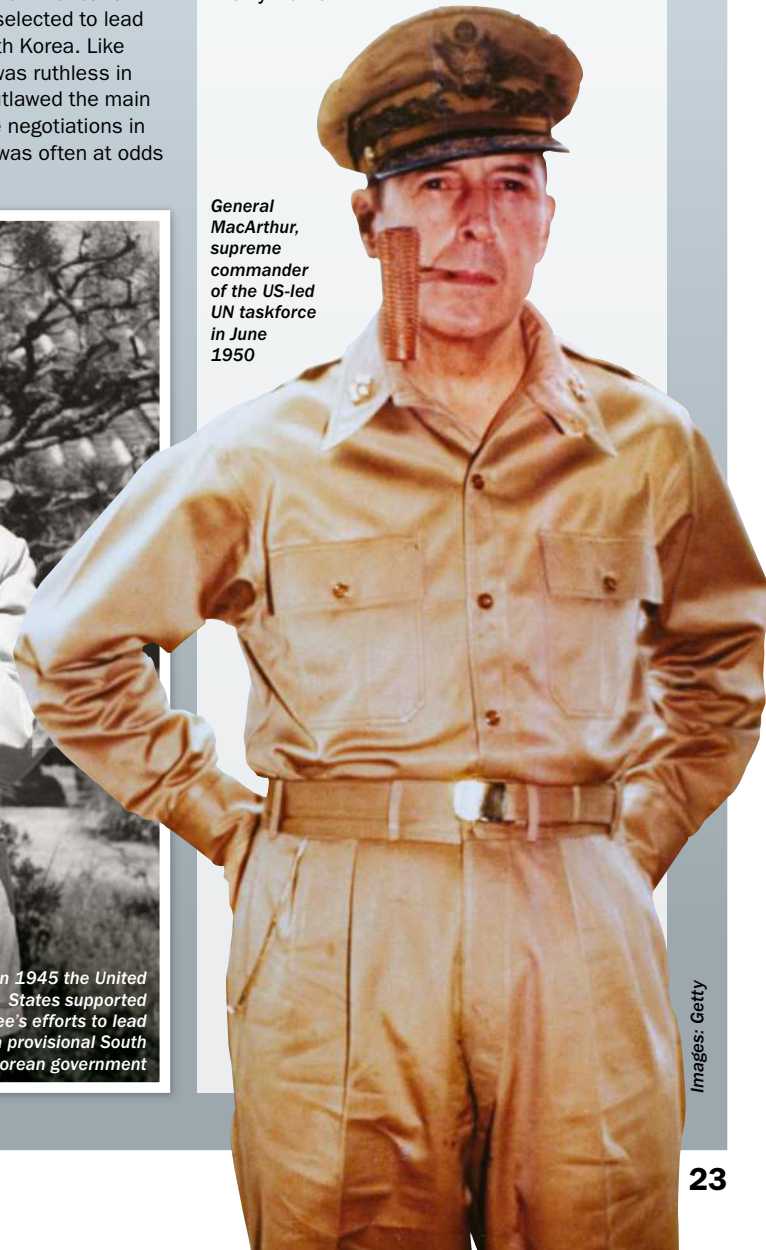
After Japan's defeat in 1945, he was one of the few educated politicians the Americans were aware of, and he was duly selected to lead a provisional government in South Korea. Like his northern counterpart, Rhee was ruthless in eliminating political rivals and outlawed the main opposition parties. During peace negotiations in 1951-3, his intransigent stance was often at odds with the wishes of Washington.



"RHEE MOVED TO HAWAII IN 1925 AND SPENT THE NEXT TWO DECADES LOBBYING WASHINGTON TO RECOGNISE KOREAN INDEPENDENCE"

In 1945 the United States supported Rhee's efforts to lead a provisional South Korean government

General MacArthur, supreme commander of the US-led UN taskforce in June 1950



Images: Getty

British tanks at the Battle of Cambrai could crush barbed wire and roll over trenches and obstacles

WORDS JOHN A. TAYLOR

CAMBRAI DAWN OF THE TANK AGE

In 1917 the British Army launched its latest though as-yet unproven battlefield technology in a bid to break the static face-off on the Western Front. But was it the overwhelming success generals had hoped for?

“IT WAS THE START OF THE BATTLE OF CAMBRAI, PERHAPS THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY OPERATION OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR, AND ONE THAT WOULD ULTIMATELY CHANGE THE CONDUCT OF WARFARE FOREVER”



At 6am on 20 November 1917 the men of 84 Infanterie-Regiment were slumbering in their dugouts, secure in the knowledge that they occupied the most formidable German positions on the entire Western Front. It was a sector so quiet that troops called it the ‘silent front’ or the ‘Flanders sanatorium’, where divisions were sent to recover from the slaughter in the Ypres Salient.

In such a peaceful place it should have been impossible for the enemy to conceal any preparations for an attack. Yet at 6.20am the calm was shattered by a stupendous artillery bombardment that erupted without warning on the German lines. Leutnant Adolf Saucke raced to the entrance of his dugout. “In the dawn, the trench was like a sea of fire from the ceaseless detonation of falling shells,” he later described. When the barrage moved forward, they rushed out to man the trenches but could see nothing: “In front of us, No-Man’s Land was cloaked in grey morning mist. Behind us lay a greyish-yellow wall of fog, from which emerged dazzling flashes of flame from the constantly bursting shells.”

Ahead in No-Man’s Land lay a network of advanced outposts designed to detect and disrupt an attack. Peering into the mist from one of these positions, Leutnant Adolf Mestwarb heard an astonished cry: “Sir, something square is coming!” As it lumbered forward, Mestwarb recognised the angular form of a British tank but with an enormous object perched on its roof. “We immediately opened fire, but unfortunately without making the slightest impression on the brute. It moved further forward, firing as it went, then veered to the left to make room for those behind, which were now appearing one after another from behind the wood in front of us.”

As they were driven back by fire from the tanks and from low-flying aircraft, Leutnant Mestwarb had no idea that the same story was being repeated along six miles of the German front. A total of 378 fighting tanks, supported by six divisions of infantry, were surging forwards, preceded by a hurricane of artillery fire. Each tank bore an enormous bundle of brushwood known as a ‘fascine’ to drop into the German trenches as a kind of stepping-stone, allowing itself and others to cross. Astonishing as it seems, all these tanks and infantry had been secretly moved into position, along with 1,000 field guns and the entire Cavalry Corps, ready to exploit a breakthrough, without the Germans having any idea of the scale of the offensive that was about to burst upon them.

Image: Piotr Forkasiewicz

Most astonishing of all, the attack was being launched not against some weak point in the German defences but against a massive and seemingly impregnable trench system known to the British as the Hindenburg Line and to the Germans as the Siegfriedstellung. The name was symbolic, because Siegfried was the greatest hero of Norse mythology – a young man who did not know the meaning of fear.

It was the start of the Battle of Cambrai, perhaps the most extraordinary operation of World War I and one that would ultimately change the conduct of warfare forever.

LUST OF BATTLE

Despite weeks of planning and preparation, the attack was a journey into the unknown for the crewmen sealed inside their 28-ton machines, as they lumbered across No-Man’s Land at four miles per hour (6 kilometres per hour).

They had no idea if their tanks could penetrate the dense belts of barbed wire and crush a path that the infantry would be able to follow, no idea if their fascines would bridge the gulf of the German trenches and no idea if the barrage, fired from unregistered field guns, would destroy its targets – particularly the enemy artillery known to be waiting ahead, which posed the only real threat to the tanks.

“AS FAST AS THE GUNNERS COULD RELOAD, THEY POURED IN A HAIL OF BULLETS, TOSH HIMSELF FIRING AND YELLING LIKE A MANIAC. AT LAST THE PANIC SUBSIDED, THE REMAINDER OF THE ENEMY APPARENTLY REALISING THE FUTILITY OF AN ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE”

One of the machines bearing down on the men of 84 Infanterie-Regiment was D27 Double Dee III, commanded by Second Lieutenant Horace Birks.

“Emerging out of the gloom a dark mass came steadily towards us: the German wire. It appeared absolutely impenetrable... It neither stopped the tank nor broke up and wound round and round with the tracks as we at first feared, but it squashed flat and remained flat, leaving a broad carpet of wire as wide as the tank, over which the following infantry were able to pick their way without great difficulty... It was a relief to get through the wire and come out on to the main German position. All this time there had been no firing and very little shell fire, and the tanks on the right and left could be seen keeping station with us,” he recalled later.

So far so good, but they then had their first view of the enormous German trenches, which

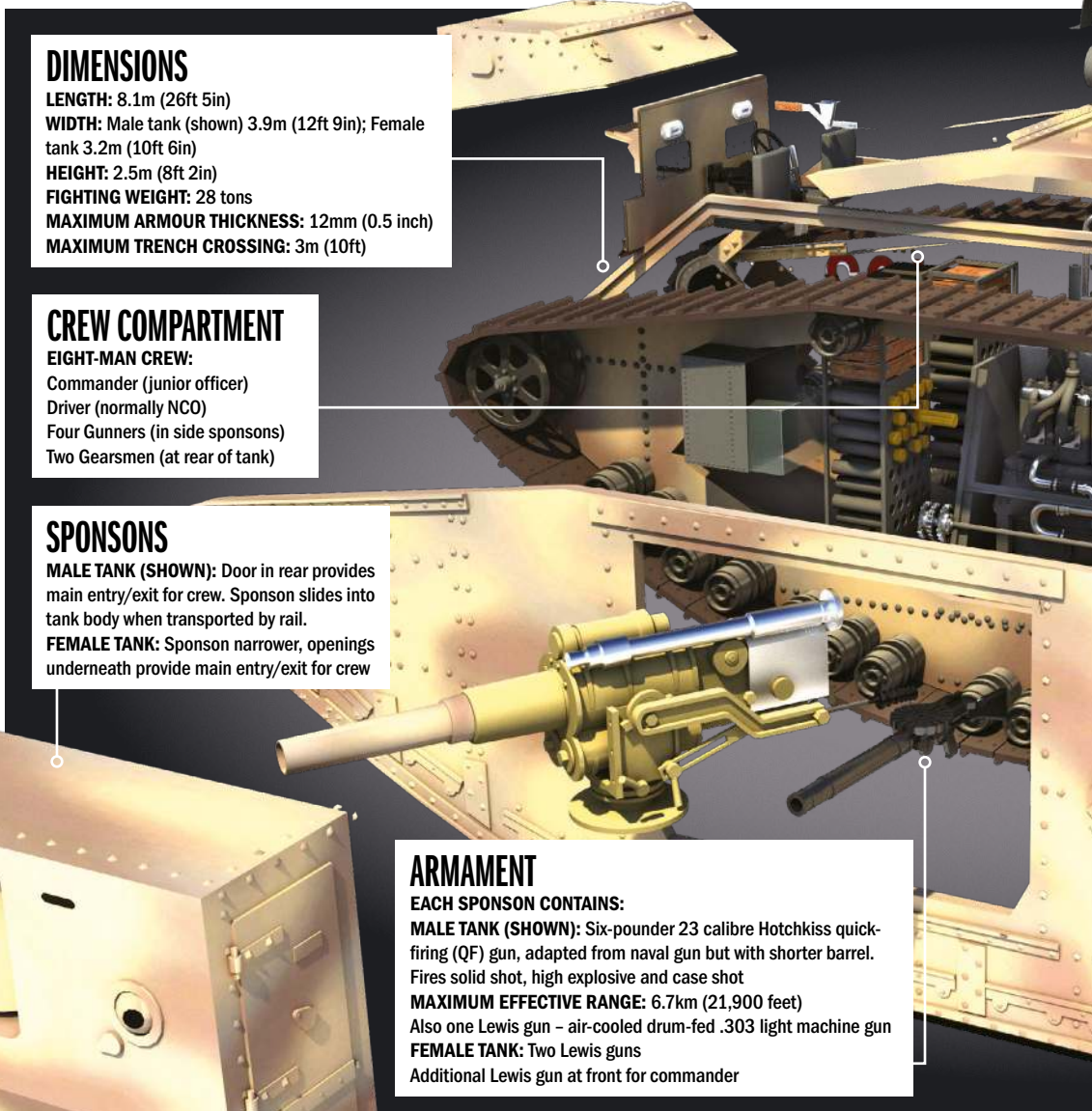
had been dug up to 3.5 metres wide to act as anti-tank obstacles. Advancing to the right of Birks’s tank was E45 Elles II, commanded by Second Lieutenant Fred Dawson. “First, poised over the deep and wide excavation: then, releasing the fascine – would it drop all right? We saw it lumber beautifully into the bottom. But could we get over? One can imagine our doubts... Anyhow, down we dropped and up, up, up – no one thought of the ‘balance point’ – until at last we crashed upon the other side, splitting open my section commander’s head, and petrol cans, oil cans and ammunition boxes scattered all over the place.”

Once safely across, the tank crews encountered varying levels of resistance depending on the fighting qualities of the units facing them. A battalion commander in 84 Infanterie-Regiment, Hauptmann Harro Soltau, told his staff, “A Prussian officer does



“Something square is coming!” Tanks of C and D Battalions, loaded with ‘fascines’ for crossing especially wide trenches, on their way to Cambrai

A tank from G Battalion passes captured field guns as the advance continues towards Bourlon on 23 November



DIMENSIONS

LENGTH: 8.1m (26ft 5in)
WIDTH: Male tank (shown) 3.9m (12ft 9in); Female tank 3.2m (10ft 6in)
HEIGHT: 2.5m (8ft 2in)
FIGHTING WEIGHT: 28 tons
MAXIMUM ARMOUR THICKNESS: 12mm (0.5 inch)
MAXIMUM TRENCH CROSSING: 3m (10ft)

CREW COMPARTMENT

EIGHT-MAN CREW:
 Commander (junior officer)
 Driver (normally NCO)
 Four Gunners (in side sponsons)
 Two Gearsmen (at rear of tank)

SPONSONS

MALE TANK (SHOWN): Door in rear provides main entry/exit for crew. Sponson slides into tank body when transported by rail.
FEMALE TANK: Sponson narrower, openings underneath provide main entry/exit for crew

ARMAMENT

EACH SPONSON CONTAINS:
MALE TANK (SHOWN): Six-pounder 23 calibre Hotchkiss quick-firing (QF) gun, adapted from naval gun but with shorter barrel. Fires solid shot, high explosive and case shot
MAXIMUM EFFECTIVE RANGE: 6.7km (21,900 feet)
 Also one Lewis gun – air-cooled drum-fed .303 light machine gun
FEMALE TANK: Two Lewis guns
 Additional Lewis gun at front for commander

not retreat,” and sent a final message to regimental headquarters: “We will hold on till the last man.” Other attackers came up against older Landwehr troops and found the biggest challenge was pressing forward as hundreds of men surrendered. But all resistance was swept aside, whether the Germans gave themselves up, or fled, or fought to the death like Soltau and his men.

In his tank D45 Destroyer II, Lieutenant James Macintosh (who referred to himself as ‘Tosh’) described how men of the 84th scattered from a trench ahead of them: “Then for the crew... began the rabbit-shooting of their fondest dreams. Streams and streams of the enemy, their retreat cut off by Tosh and their front menaced by the approaching wave, broke wildly from cover. As fast as the gunners could reload, they poured in a hail of bullets, Tosh himself firing and yelling like a maniac. At last the panic subsided, the remainder of the enemy apparently realising the futility of an attempt to escape: but it left Tosh and his crew hoarse with joy and almost beside themselves with excitement. To those who have never experienced it, the lust of battle must always appear unnatural and terrible, but ever after Tosh would look back to those few minutes of slaughter as among the most joyful moments of his life.”

A YEAR OF FAILURE

Such emotions may appear strange, even disturbing in someone like Macintosh – the son of a South African MP, a loving family man and later a prominent lawyer who was described as being “of modest and gentle nature”.

In part, the passion no doubt stemmed from the release of pent-up frustration after years of static trench warfare, in which the odds had been heavily weighted against the attackers and in favour of the Germans.

There was also an overwhelming sense of relief – even disbelief – that the attack was going so precisely to plan. For the Battle of Cambrai was nothing short of a last-ditch gamble to show that tanks really were viable as a weapon of war. It was, in effect, an attack in which tanks would either make history or become history.

To understand this, it is necessary to look back over the preceding 14 months since the first tentative tank action on 15 September 1916. The 25 or so primitive Mark I machines had a formidable effect on German morale and an equal but opposite effect on British morale both at home and abroad. But a series of further piecemeal operations during the Battle of the Somme and then in the Battles of Arras and Bullecourt in March and April 1917,

‘BETRAYAL’ BY THE POWs

THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE WAS NEARLY LOST WHEN BRITISH PLANS WERE REVEALED TO THE ENEMY

Despite the secrecy of the British preparations, the Germans did receive one vital warning of the impending attack, and evidence suggests their response to that alert may have significantly affected the outcome of the battle.

On 18 November a trench raid led by Leutnant Bernhard Hegemann captured six men from First Battalion Royal Irish Fusiliers. Under interrogation, they revealed that an attack was planned early on the 20 November and described what they had seen of the preparations – including artillery reinforcements, the presence of tanks and the arrival of the crack 51st (Highland) Division.

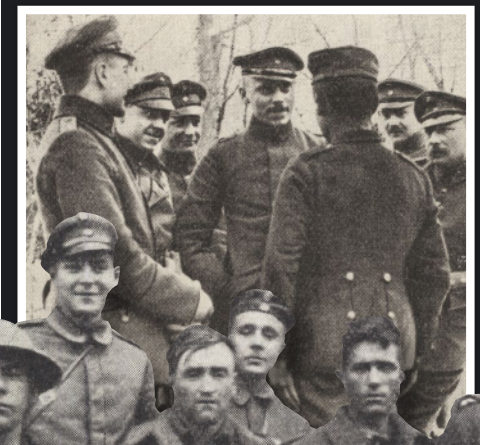
Believing it would be no more than a limited operation against the Flesquières Ridge, the Germans rushed reinforcements into the area just before the attack, including three battalions of troops who had been in reserve and field-gun batteries that were returning from the Eastern Front.

This amounted to an effective doubling of the manpower available there, and German sources indicate that the reinforcements played a decisive role in delaying the Highlanders’ advance across the ridge. The hold-up at Flesquières was regarded as a key factor in the failure to take Broulon on the first day, with fatal consequences for the entire operation.

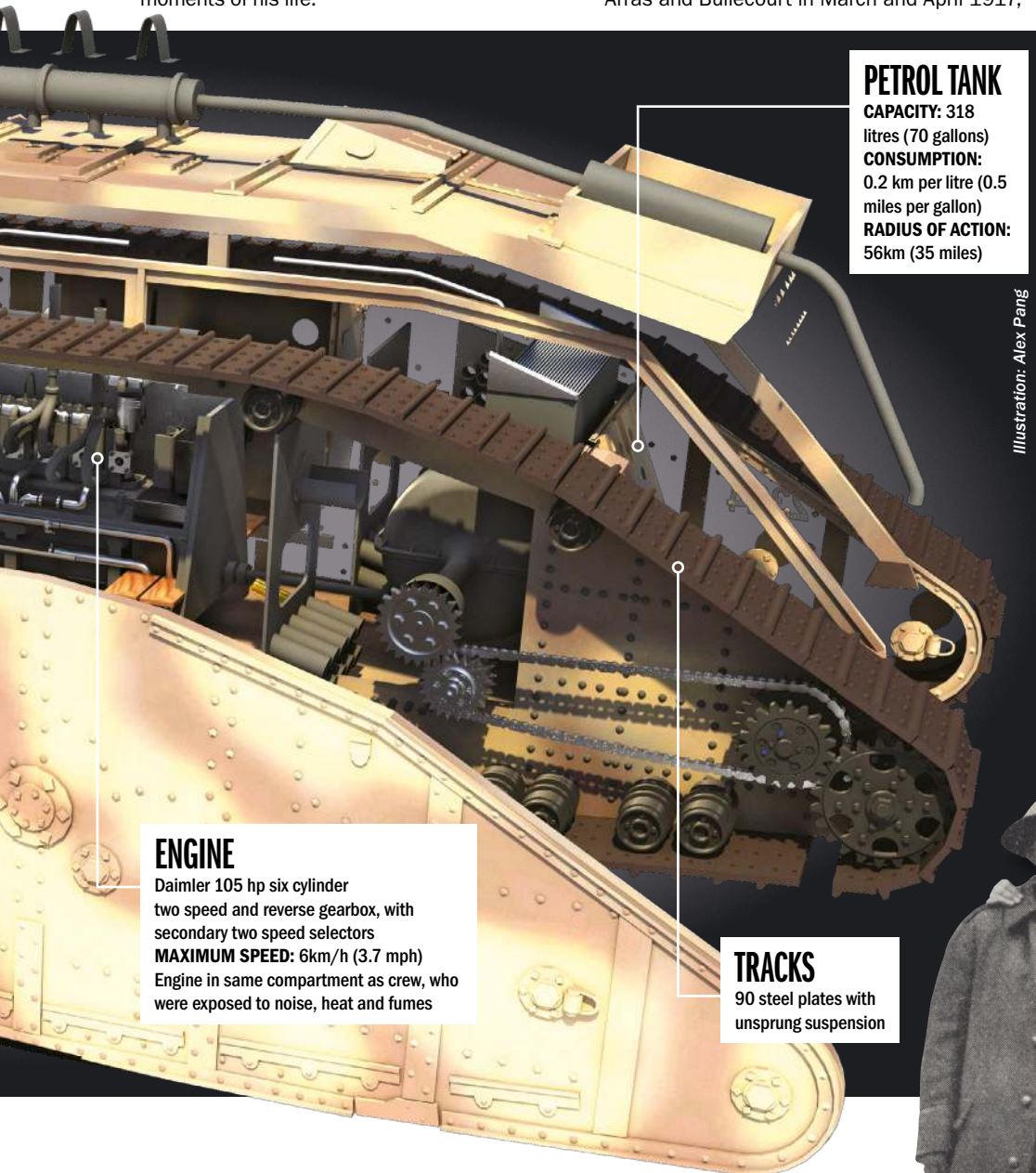
The discovery of the original interrogation report in German archives – as described in *Deborah and the War of the Tanks* (Pen & Sword, 2016) – has revealed one reason why the prisoners gave away so much information. Two of them were Irish Catholics disillusioned by the political situation in the wake of the Easter Rising, who told the Germans that, “a great animosity prevails towards England, with no interest whatsoever in her war aims.”

The German report added, “The Irishmen among the prisoners are thoroughly war-weary and speak badly of the English. They say if an uprising takes place in Ireland, they would take up arms against England without more ado.” All the prisoners survived the war. There is no evidence of official action being taken against any of them on their return home.

Hauptmann Soltau (centre) and officers from 84 Infanterie-Regiment, organisers of the raid that gave the Germans vital warning of the attack



Some of the Royal Irish Fusiliers who were captured in a trench raid on 18 November, posing with their German captors in Cambrai



PETROL TANK

CAPACITY: 318 litres (70 gallons)
CONSUMPTION: 0.2 km per litre (0.5 miles per gallon)
RADIUS OF ACTION: 56km (35 miles)

Illustration: Alex Pang

ENGINE

Daimler 105 hp six cylinder
two speed and reverse gearbox, with secondary two speed selectors
MAXIMUM SPEED: 6km/h (3.7 mph)
Engine in same compartment as crew, who were exposed to noise, heat and fumes

TRACKS

90 steel plates with unsprung suspension

revealed not so much the potential capabilities of tanks as their appalling vulnerability.

Although their armour plating was largely effective against small arms fire, it was no proof against a direct hit from a field gun. Tanks also faced the constant risk of mechanical breakdown and above all of becoming bogged down – referred to as ‘ditched’ or ‘bellied’ – in ground that had been churned up by prolonged artillery bombardment. This became all but inevitable from the end of July 1917, when tanks were sent to spearhead the British offensive in the Ypres Salient that became known as the Battle of Passchendaele. It was obvious to anyone that a tank, even the improved Mark IV model, would be hopelessly out of its depth in such low-lying terrain, especially once the preparatory bombardment had churned the ground into a swamp. Colonel Christopher Baker-Carr, commander of First Tank Brigade, accurately summed up their plight: “If a careful search had been made

from the English Channel to Switzerland, no more unsuitable spot could have been discovered.”

Despite this, the Tank Corps plunged dutifully but disastrously into ‘the bogs of Passchendaele’, until the entire salient seemed to be littered with the wrecked hulks of tanks, often sunk up to their sponsons in mud. It is hardly surprising that by the end of the battle the experimental weapon was widely regarded as a failure – or as rumour had it, tanks were to be abandoned as an instrument of war and the recently formed corps disbanded.

ADVANCE, HIT, RETIRE

Fortunately the unit’s commanders were men of vision and were already aware that tanks were doomed to failure unless they were allowed to fight on their own terms. Until now they had always been sent to attack over

“THE TANK CORPS PLUNGED DUTIFULLY BUT DISASTROUSLY INTO ‘THE BOGS OF PASSCHENDAELE’, UNTIL THE ENTIRE SALIENT SEEMED TO BE LITTERED WITH THE WRECKED HULKS OF TANKS”



Above: Gunners from 108 Feld-Artillerie-Regiment fight a duel to the death with the tanks advancing towards them on Flesquières Ridge

ground churned up by artillery bombardment – in the case of the Battle of Passchendaele, amounting to more than 4 million shells fired. This was deemed necessary to batter down the enemy’s defences, in particular the belts of barbed wire that posed an impassable barrier to the infantry.

The Tank Corps top brass were well aware that they could only succeed if they attacked over firm, unbroken terrain that had not been pulverised by artillery fire, with the tanks



themselves crushing paths through the wire to be followed by the infantry and cavalry. Under this new doctrine of warfare, the role of the artillery was also transformed, as described in the official history of the battle: "If complete surprise were to be secured, the artillery must be assembled in secret and deliver a sudden storm of fire at zero hour without any previous ranging or registration." Advances in surveying, calibration and ranging made this possible in theory, but it had never been attempted on a large scale.

Putting these ideas to the test would require a bold experiment, and the chosen setting was a section of the line fronting the key German stronghold of Cambrai. The sector was bounded to the left and right by two canals, which would trap the defenders in a killing zone if the frontline could be breached. On the face of it this seemed unlikely, since the Germans had constructed a formidable defensive system in the rear of the fighting and then pulled back to occupy it in the spring of 1917. However, the positions were known to be relatively lightly manned, since the Germans reasoned that no attack could take place without a lengthy bombardment, giving them ample time to bring up reserves. The area was

therefore vulnerable to a surprise assault, and the well-drained downland was perfect country for tanks.

According to the leading strategist Lieutenant Colonel John Fuller, the attack was originally conceived as no more than "a surprise raid, the duration of which would be about 24 hours. The whole operation may be summed up in three words: 'Advance, Hit, Retire.'" But this idea became conflated with a wider Third Army plan to storm the Hindenburg Line, with cavalry pouring through the breaches to threaten Cambrai itself.

The British commander Sir Douglas Haig gave his blessing to the project,

H45 Hyacinth, ditched near the village of Ribécourt on November 20, dramatically illustrates the hazards of crossing the wide German trenches



"THE AREA WAS THEREFORE VULNERABLE TO A SURPRISE ASSAULT, AND THE WELL-DRAINED DOWNLAND WAS PERFECT COUNTRY FOR TANKS"



The remains of D51 Deborah in Flesquières just after the war. This photo was a treasured keepsake for her commander Frank Heap. Copyright the Heap family

Right: John Taylor is author of Deborah And The War Of The Tanks , available from Pen & Sword

DEBORAH D51

THE HULK OF THIS MARK IV TANK REMAINED BURIED FOR DECADES, BUT IT WILL GO ON DISPLAY IN NOVEMBER

Deborah D51 was one of 36 fighting tanks from D Battalion of the Tank Corps that spearheaded the attack against the German-held village of Flesquières on the morning of 20 November. She was the second tank with the crew number D51 – her predecessor was been lost during the Battle of Passchendaele three months before.

Most tanks attacking Flesquières headed off to either side of the village, where many were picked off by German artillery hidden behind the ridge. Deborah was the only one to enter the village but was knocked out by a concealed field gun.

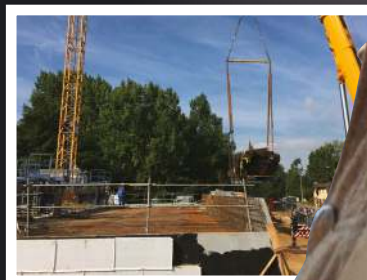
Four of the crew – Gunners Joseph Cheverton, George Foot, William Galway and Frederick Tipping – were killed outright. The commander,

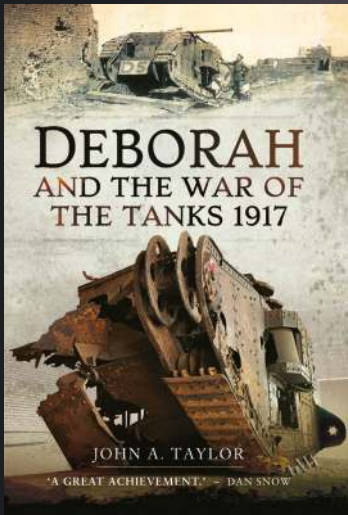
Second Lieutenant Frank Heap, slipped back to the British lines with the survivors. A letter he wrote indicates that another member of the crew also died during the attack.

The shattered hulk of D-51 remained in the village street until 1919, when it was buried in a large hole during the battlefield clear-up. In 1998 the tank was discovered and excavated by the Cambrai hotelier and historian Philippe Gorczyński, and since then it has been displayed in a barn in the village.

In July Deborah completed her last journey when she was moved by lorry and crane into a new purpose-built museum beside the cemetery in Flesquières where her crew are buried. This is due to open in November, in time for the centenary of the battle.

The museum will provide a fitting final resting place for Deborah – a unique, powerful relic and almost certainly the only surviving tank that took part in the historic attack at Cambrai. For more information, please visit: www.amazing-cambrai.com/cambrai17





“THE MUSEUM WILL PROVIDE A FITTING FINAL RESTING PLACE FOR DEBORAH – A UNIQUE AND POWERFUL RELIC, AND ALMOST CERTAINLY THE ONLY SURVIVING TANK THAT TOOK PART IN THE HISTORIC ATTACK AT CAMBRAI”



recognising that it would help to maintain pressure on the Germans after the Third Battle of Ypres had drawn to a close. However, he added one caveat: the entire sector was dominated by the Broulton Ridge with its sinister crest of woodland, and this high ground had to be taken on the first day, otherwise the British gains would be unsustainable and the advance must be halted.

So the tanks were to be given the chance to prove themselves, but in the context of an offensive whose scope and objectives were loosely defined. As it turned out, their very success contained the seeds of failure.

IN SIGHT OF VICTORY

Unlike previous attacks in which the various arms had little contact beforehand, Cambrai was envisaged as the first truly combined operation with individual infantry units and tank crews training and even socialising together to ensure complete understanding and co-operation. As we have seen, the success of this planning was apparent in the first phase of the attack, which some participants likened to an exercise or parade ground manoeuvre.

So on 20 November 1917 the irresistible force of tanks and infantry swept almost all before it, punching an enormous hole through the German defences along a six-mile (9.6 kilometre) front. In a war when advances were often measured in hundreds of yards and tens of thousands of casualties, the enemy were driven back three to four miles (5-6.5 kilometre) at a cost of around 4,000 British dead, wounded and missing. The attackers inflicted severe losses, and took more than 4,000 prisoners and destroyed or captured 100 field guns. Incredible though it seems, in one day they had captured an area roughly equal to the entire gains in the Third Battle of Ypres.

However, victory was not total. Around Flesquières in the north of the battle zone, German field guns hidden in the dead ground exacted a fearful toll on the advancing tanks, firing over open sights to destroy at least 28 machines as they breasted the ridge. This enabled the infantry to mount a desperate defence of the village, holding the elite troops of 51st (Highland) Division at bay until the Germans withdrew during the night to avoid being surrounded. The consequences of this delay were serious, for the cavalry were unable to advance across the ridge on their crucial mission to seize the Broulton Ridge. Similarly, the strategically important crossings over the St Quentin Canal at Masnières on the right of the advance were blocked or destroyed, limiting the opportunity for an encircling cavalry thrust to the east.

With Broulton still in enemy hands, the offensive had failed to meet Haig's main criterion for success, but the spires of Cambrai were in sight and it seemed inconceivable to simply abandon such spectacular gains. The offensive continued, but its character had completely changed. The glorious élan of the first day was gone, to be replaced by the kind of gruelling slog that we normally associate with the Great War. The Tank Corps had already paid a heavy price for its heroism, with 179 of its 378 fighting tanks put out of action on 20 November from a combination of breakdowns,

ditching and direct hits. The survivors continued to play their part, but there were no fresh reserves to call on and no more opportunity for the carefully coordinated surprise attacks that proved so devastating at the outset.

After days of bitter fighting on Bourlon Ridge and in the surrounding villages, the Third Army commander General Sir Julian Byng finally ordered a halt to the offensive on 27 November. The crest of the hill had been captured, but the enemy still controlled the shoulders of the ridge, and there were insufficient resources to dislodge them. The British settled down to consolidate their gains, but it was a dispiriting end to a campaign that had started so brilliantly. In the words of the official historian, "None could view with satisfaction the events of the past seven days: so many attacks had failed, so many casualties had been suffered and so much hardship endured by the troops, in attempting to force a definite issue and to break a resistance of which the strength appeared to have been consistently underestimated."

A TERRIBLE SHOCK

Having fought to a standstill, the Tank Corps now began withdrawing to its winter quarters on the Somme. On November 30 Major William Watson was preparing his tanks for departure when he noticed "strange things" were happening. "We could hear distinctly bursts of machine gun fire, although the line should have been six miles away at least. German field gun shells – we could not be mistaken – were falling on the crest of a hill not three-quarters of a mile from the camp... We had not fully realised what was happening, when a number



Above: As the Germans cleared away wrecked tanks after the battle, the fate of their crewmen was recorded in often graphic detail

of wounded infantrymen came straggling past. They told me that the enemy was attacking everywhere, that he had broken through near Gouzeaucourt, capturing many guns, and was, to the best of their belief, still advancing."

The Germans had rallied their forces, secretly brought up reserves and launched a massive counterattack, which caught the British as unawares as the original advance had caught them ten days before. Their assault took the form of a great pincer movement designed to drive the British out of the ground they had taken. It was eventually halted through determined resistance on both axes of the advance, though not before the Germans had made substantial gains to the south, equivalent to the area captured by the British and resulting in a similar number of prisoners. Both sides could therefore declare the honours more or less even when the German advance itself ground to a halt.

The British position in Bourlon Wood now formed an untenable salient, and on the night of

4-5 December they pulled back to a new 'line of resistance', mainly following the old Hindenburg support system along Flesquières Ridge. With that, everyone settled down for the winter.

Both sides could draw some reassurance from the outcome of the battle. The Germans had demonstrated the effectiveness of their newly refined infantry and artillery tactics, involving the use of dedicated stormtroops, which were to prove nearly decisive when put into full-scale operation in March 1918.

On the other hand, although flawed in its overall conception, the Battle of Cambrai has gone down in history as the first, crucial demonstration of the power of tanks when used effectively en masse and in combination with other arms. From now on, no defensive position could be considered impregnable, especially once the more manoeuvrable Mark V tanks became available in early 1918.

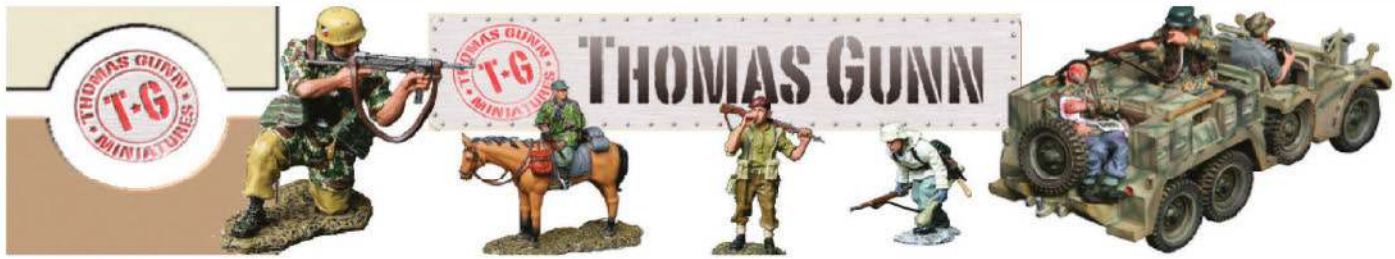
The Bavarian Crown Prince Rupprecht, commander of the army group at Cambrai, recognised that conditions had fundamentally changed. "The enemy will be able to repeat such hit-and-run attacks wherever the terrain permits the use of tanks. So we can no longer talk about 'quiet fronts.'" Ironically, they had been driven back by a combination of guile, careful planning and mechanical ingenuity – characteristics we normally associate with the German rather than the British army.

Leutnant Bernhard Hegemann of 84 Infanterie-Regiment, who was captured in the battle had a final word: "Here our high command suffered a terrible shock, just like the one experienced by the Romans when Hannibal and his elephants appeared in Italy after going through Spain and Gaul and across the Alps. What the elephants of Carthage were to the legions of Rome, so to a devastating degree were the English tank squadrons to the German troops – a tour de force of British military engineering."

"FROM NOW ON NO DEFENSIVE POSITION COULD BE CONSIDERED IMPREGNABLE, ESPECIALLY ONCE THE MORE MANOEUVRABLE MARK V TANKS BECAME AVAILABLE IN EARLY 1918"



After the war, wrecked tanks from E Battalion still littered the ridge of Flesquières beside the German trenches that had been their objective



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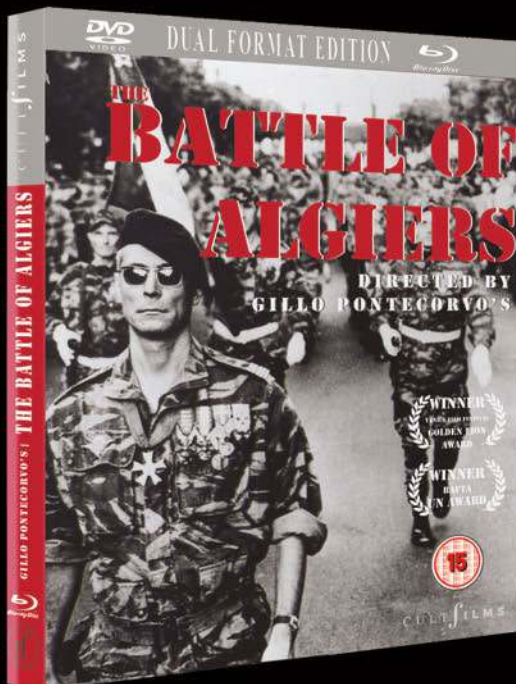
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CHARGE OF THE FRENCH TANKS

On 16 April 1917 the French army made its own tracks in the annals of armoured warfare. Oxford University researcher Jonathan Krause uncovers this forgotten triumph of Gallic ingenuity

When discussing the Nivelle Offensive it is all too easy to get wrapped up in the big, obvious questions and conundrums surrounding the fateful attack. Why did Nivelle persist when it was clear the plan had been compromised? Why did he continue to push beyond the 48 hours promised? How could an army the size of the French army in 1917 effectively go on strike – and do so without their allies or enemies knowing it? All of these critical questions and many others besides warrant substantial attention and are as penetratingly interesting today as they were a century ago. What gets too often lost, however, is the fact that 16 April 1917 was also the first French deployment of armour (tanks) in history.

As most people with even a passing interest in World War I and military history will tell you, the first use of tanks in combat came during the battle of Flers-Courcelette on 15 September 1916. 49 Mk I British tanks were committed to the attack, advancing alongside French and British troops (including my great-great uncle, Private Charles Cordwell, Grenadier Guards) at the height of the Somme battle. The shape and history of these tanks remain iconic over a century later, with their body-spanning treads and poor speed and manoeuvrability. French tanks, which had been designed at the same time as their British counterparts, do not share quite the same fame.

On 16 April 1917 there were two designs. The first tank to be conceived and built in France was the Schneider CA, built by Schneider-

Creusot, the famous French armaments producer. Its first test run came as early as December 1915, where an early prototype attempted to simply manoeuvre around a mock battlefield. Jean Baptiste Eugène Estienne, father of the French tank, exclaimed that the tank had performed exemplarily. In reality, however, a tank in this state was not going to be capable of safely traversing the severely broken ground, ever-widening trenches and other defences the Germans were constructing along the Western Front.

Like most tanks of its day, the Schneider was incredibly slow, with its 60-horsepower engine propelling the armoured behemoth at a theoretical top speed of about five miles per hour. In practice it might do half that. The Schneider somewhat made up for its immobility with decent armament, including a modified (shortened) 75mm cannon as its main gun mounted in an awkward fashion off the forward right-hand of the tank, which fired standard 75mm high explosive rounds. It also had a pair of 1914 model Hotchkiss machine guns in ball-mounds at the side, giving wide fields of fire.

One problem the Schneider faced was the spare petrol canisters. Placed outside the hull, they very easily ignited during combat, which caused serious problems for the crew, especially if they had to evacuate and get past the dangerously explosive canisters to reach the relative safety outside.

The other design was the St Chamond, itself a testament to poor French oversight and control in weapons design and manufacturing. It was designed separately from the Schneider project, and was the child of the industrial rivalry between Schneider-Creusot and Forges et Aciéries de la Marine et d'Homécourt (FAMH), as well as internal rivalry within the French army (the order for the St Chamond tanks was placed via the 'Service Automobile', whose commander wanted to expand the SA to control all motorised vehicles in service). This rivalry led to something of an insecure need on the part of the FAMH design team to upstage the Schneider tank.

The St Chamond team was led by Colonel Émile Rimailho, the brilliant mind behind the French army's most valuable and effective

howitzer of the entire war: the 155mm 'court tir rapide' (which also bore his name, Rimailho). Instead of the Schneider's shortened 75mm cannon and two machine guns, the St Chamond would sport a full-size 75mm field gun and four machine guns, one in front, one in the back and one on each side. The engine was a hybrid gasoline-electric design many decades ahead of its time, capable of generating about 90 horsepower. Each tread was powered by a separate, dedicated electric motor – another stroke of design genius.

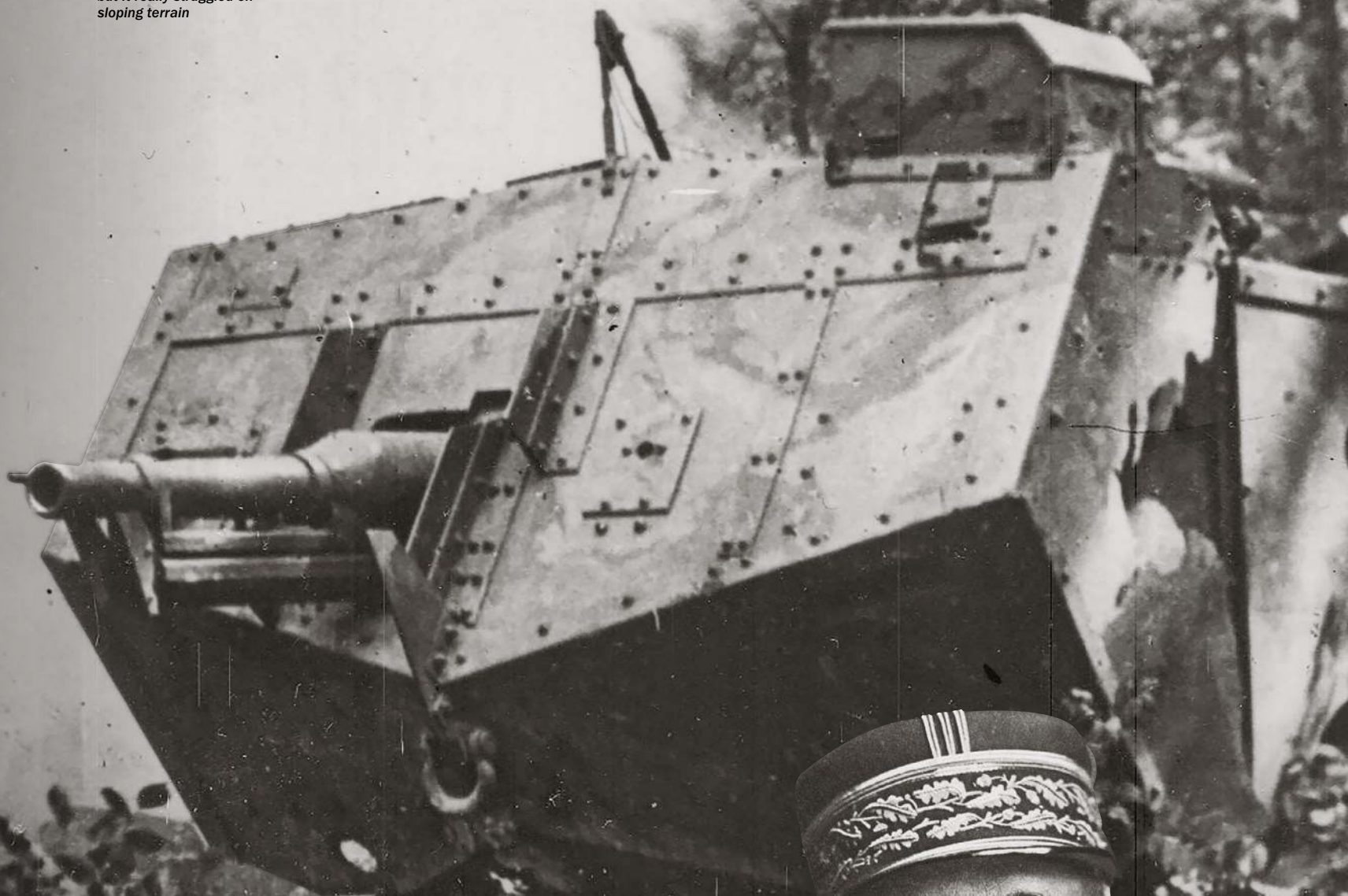
Despite the massive size and weight of the St Chamond it could, in theory, reach a top speed of about seven miles per hour, but its awkward design (being very long and with small treads in the middle of the carriage) made it extremely susceptible to ditching out in the broken terrain of the Western Front. This ultimately was the Achilles' heel of the design and the cause for its extremely poor reputation, both at the time and today. The flat roof was also dangerous as grenades thrown by the Germans were easily caught there, and thus liable to do fatal damage to crew members as the explosion loosed shrapnel and armour splinters into the inside of the tank itself. This was later rectified by gently sloping the roofs of later builds.

The entrance to the tank was via a rear door, which some crews painted white on the inside with the hope of using it as a form of rough Morse code, with the door being opened and closed to mimic the electrical impulses one would send in traditional Morse code. It was an inventive idea, but one that does not seem to have been very successful.

Ultimately, the early French tank designs were something of a bust, not entirely unlike their British and German equivalents. Where the French really found success was in lighter tanks later in the war, like the famed Renault FT17. The Renault was beloved by its crews and found use all over the world, ending up fighting in the Russian Civil War and even making it into the hands of a small number of Afghan warlords. At least two Renault FT17s were captured from local warlords by ISAF forces after the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. They were still working.

“ONE PROBLEM THE SCHNEIDER FACED WAS THE SPARE PETROL CANISTERS. PLACED OUTSIDE THE HULL, THEY VERY EASILY IGNITED DURING COMBAT”

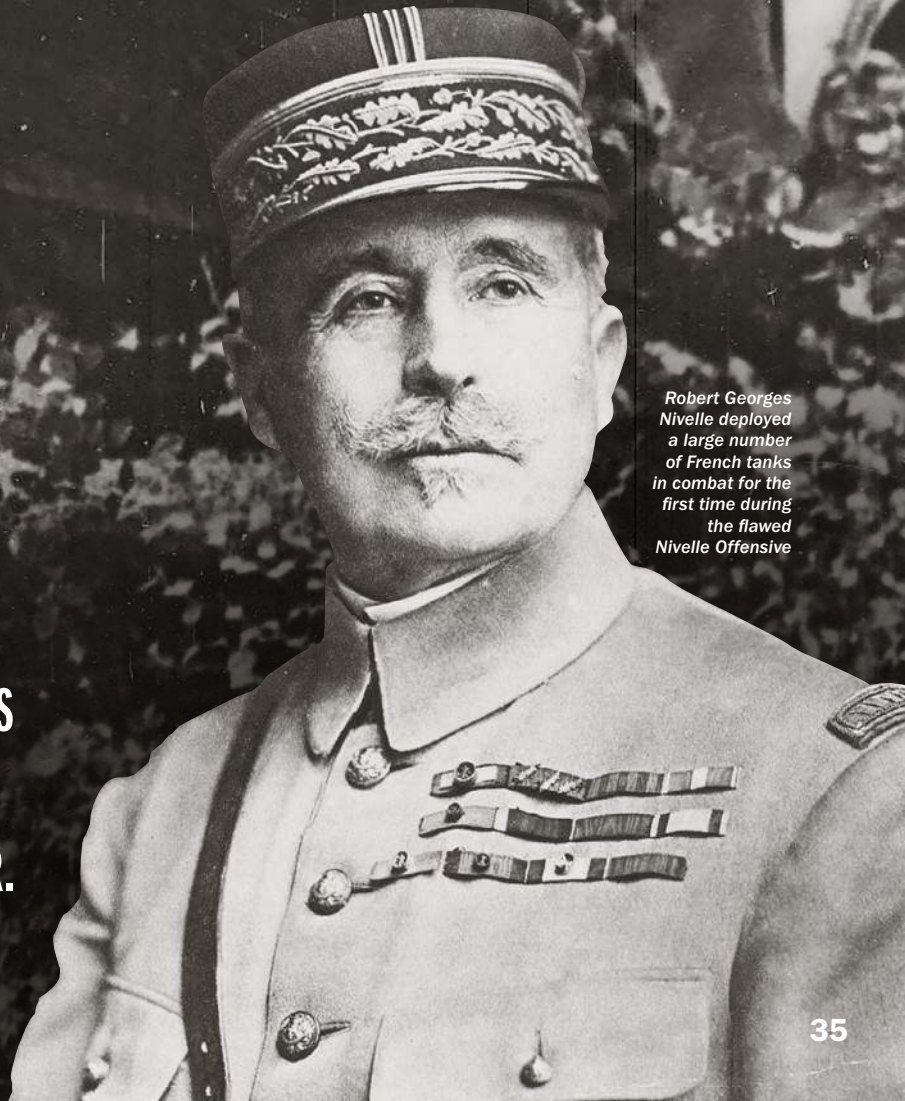
A St Chamond operating in woodland. Its good turning ability made such operation functional, but it really struggled on sloping terrain



Robert Georges Nivelle deployed a large number of French tanks in combat for the first time during the flawed Nivelle Offensive

“LIKE MOST TANKS OF ITS DAY, THE SCHNEIDER WAS INCREDIBLY SLOW WITH ITS 60-HORSEPOWER ENGINE PROPELLING THE ARMoured BEHEMOTH AT A THEORETICAL TOP SPEED OF ABOUT FIVE MILES PER HOUR. IN PRACTICE IT MIGHT DO HALF THAT”

Image: Getty



LAND FIT FOR THE FALLEN



Millions make pilgrimages to the beautifully kept Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemeteries, the last resting place of thousands of young men. Yet without one man's vision and determination, these dignified and noble places might never have existed

WORDS TINA EDISS

The battlefields of World War I are now dotted with cemeteries – places of serenity rather than slaughter. White headstones line up like soldiers on parade, the parade ground a still and silent place of reflection and remembrance. On a summer's day, the shadow of an English rose will fall on every stone.

The existence of these sites owe a lasting debt to one man who was determined that the

great sacrifice of these soldiers would never be forgotten. Born in Bristol in 1869, Fabian Arthur Goulstone Ware was 45 when war broke out and was considered too old to fight.

A former teacher, schools administrator and newspaper editor, he was put in charge of the Red Cross mobile units to search and care for the wounded. As he travelled he came across many hasty burials in fields, in farms, in woods, even in gardens. He became troubled about the



THEIR NAMES
FOR EVER

lack of an organisation responsible for keeping records of these burials.

Saddened by the scale of the loss and deeply concerned about the future of these forsaken graves, he began to seek out burial places and keep precise records of the names and locations. "Ware had this extraordinary vision," explains Victoria Wallace, Director General of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC). "I suppose as a journalist he was a great questioner and perhaps, by nature, slightly suspicious of government. He was furiously independent and had great vision and extraordinary drive. This was a man who could quite easily have done nothing in the war. But he went to the battlefields, mustering cars to support the Red Cross. He then realised there was a great problem in what they could do with the war dead."

In October 1914 Ware was visiting some well-marked but unrecorded war burials in Bethune Town Cemetery with Red Cross assessor Lieutenant Colonel Stewart. It was here the idea of an organisation that would record, look after and maintain the graves was born.

Well connected, Ware persuaded the War Office that a department should be set up to deal with the ever-increasing toll. The task was

given to Ware and the Graves Registration Commission was formed in March 1915.

The land held by the Allies was divided into sections for teams to search: every grave was to be marked. Hastily constructed crosses with fading details were replaced with sturdier versions with more permanent inscriptions.

The teams would make endless enquires: Ware had good contacts among French officials and churchmen. However, the best information would often come from local children, who would lead them across muddy fields to lonely corners and lost burials.

Diligently they searched for clues: buttons perhaps or initials on rusty spoons, numbers on ground sheets, inscriptions on watches, even the shade of khaki issued by various units provided valuable information. All helped give an identity back to the lost. Taking great risks, the men began identifying the fallen, even working in danger in the frontline trenches.

In March 1915 General Haig commented, "It is fully recognised that the work of the organisation is of purely sentimental value, and that it does not directly contribute to the successful termination of the war. It has, however, extraordinary moral value to the troops in the field as well as to the relatives and friends

The CWGC's memorials offer a lasting place to honour and remember the fallen. The largest is Tyne Cot, Belgium, pictured here

"IT WAS HERE THE IDEA OF AN ORGANISATION THAT WOULD RECORD, LOOK AFTER AND MAINTAIN THE GRAVES WAS BORN"

ME LIVETH
ERMORE



of the dead at home. The mere fact that these officers visit day after day the cemeteries close behind the trenches, fully exposed to shell and rifle fire, to accurately record not only the names of the dead but also the exact place of burial, has a symbolic value to the men that it would be difficult to exaggerate."

As the war neared its conclusion, Ware's concern for the graves grew. Determined, he campaigned for an organisation, feeling it should be imperial rather than national, as the soldiers had come from all over the world. Finally in May 1917 the Imperial War Graves Commission (now known as the Commonwealth War Graves Commission) was set up. Edward, Prince of Wales was president, with Ware as vice chairman.

Ware's ideals were ahead of his time. Life in the trenches had been horrific, and the experience led to a strong feeling of brotherhood among the men, and Ware felt this spirit should be continued in death.

He asked Sir Frederic Kenyon, director of the British Museum, to put together a report setting out the commission's principles, which are still held today: each of the dead would be commemorated by name on permanent headstones or memorials; headstones would be uniform, and there would be no distinction made on account of military or civil rank, race or creed; there would be no repatriation of remains, as it was something only the wealthy could afford.

This led to huge disagreements, as grieving relatives wanted to choose headstones for their loved ones. Many wanted a cross rather than a headstone and wished to use their own wording. Others wanted to build private memorials. In some circles, the commission's attitude was seen as tyrannical.

"There was massive public opposition to the approach and it continued to be debated in parliament until 1920," said Victoria. "It was an extraordinarily difficult thing. I don't think there was a general expectation at the time of remains being repatriated. For the government it would have been an impossibility in terms of both morale and practicalities."

The debate came to a conclusion in May 1920. Winston Churchill and MP William Burdett-Coutts spoke eloquently for the commission and finally convinced the opposition that the memorials would commemorate the nation's huge loss in perpetuity. Work on the cemeteries as we know them today could begin.

Funding was to come – and still does – from the governments of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India and the UK. The amounts are proportionate to the number of graves. At the time no one had any real idea of how much it would cost. Between 1919-1920 the cost was £243,577 18s 11d. In 2015 to 2016 the CWGC received over £61 million.

The cemeteries were to be dignified, respectful places, but never gloomy. Each would have an altar – the Stone of Remembrance – and a huge cross – the Sword of Sacrifice.

"Ware's vision was to pull the great thinkers of the time and some of the greatest minds in the cultural heritage sphere and use their combined creative genius to come up with something that had such a quality and such a compelling overall vision," Victoria explained.

Sir Edwin Lutyens, Sir Herbert Baker and Sir Reginald Blomfield – famous architects of the time – set to work designing the cemeteries. Rudyard Kipling, who had lost his son in the war, was to be the wordsmith. He chose the inscriptions, "Their Names Liveth for Evermore", while the graves of those buried without a name read, "A Solder of the Great War, Known unto God". The Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew was consulted. Plants were chosen that would bloom for every season – an English country garden in a foreign field.

By the time World War I ended, the landscape looked like the world itself had died. Few trees were left standing, and the land was in chaos: a dismal, muddy wilderness cut with trenches and scarred with craters. It was vicious with rusting barbed wire and deadly with unexploded shells. Roads had been pulverised, bridges broken, railways obliterated, villages reduced to ruins – and the dead lay everywhere.

A labour corps was established to deal with the work. Using Ware's records, isolated graves and small cemeteries could be incorporated into larger ones. Earlier cemeteries, battered by bombardments, were set in order.

The commission hired gardeners – at first ex-soldiers – who cleared and prepared the land to be fit for fallen heroes. Much of the work was carried out by units nicknamed 'mobile gardening parties'. Lorries were loaded with tents, tools, provisions and plants, and the teams set off into the muddy wasteland for days on end. Life was tough and dangerous: work included clearing unexploded bombs from sites selected as cemeteries. Conditions were primitive, and food and provisions were hard to come by.

At first the graves were marked with wooden crosses that were eventually replaced by headstones made from Portland stone. Each was engraved with the regimental badge, name, rank and date of death. For a fee the next of kin could add a short inscription; a contribution that soon became voluntary.

Three experimental cemeteries were built: of those, Forceville in the Somme region became the template. A walled cemetery within a garden setting, it was said by those who first saw it to be noble, classically beautiful and stirring.

So what would have happened to the war dead without Fabian Ware? In previous wars the rank and file were buried in mass pits, while officers' remains were often sent home.



A soldier assembles wooden grave markers for fallen soldiers. Eventually the wooden markers were replaced with headstones



“THE COMMISSION HIRED GARDENERS – AT FIRST EX-SOLDIERS – WHO CLEARED AND PREPARED THE LAND TO BE FIT FOR FALLEN HEROES. MUCH OF THE WORK WAS CARRIED OUT BY UNITS NICKNAMED MOBILE GARDENING PARTIES”

LAND FIT FOR THE FALLEN



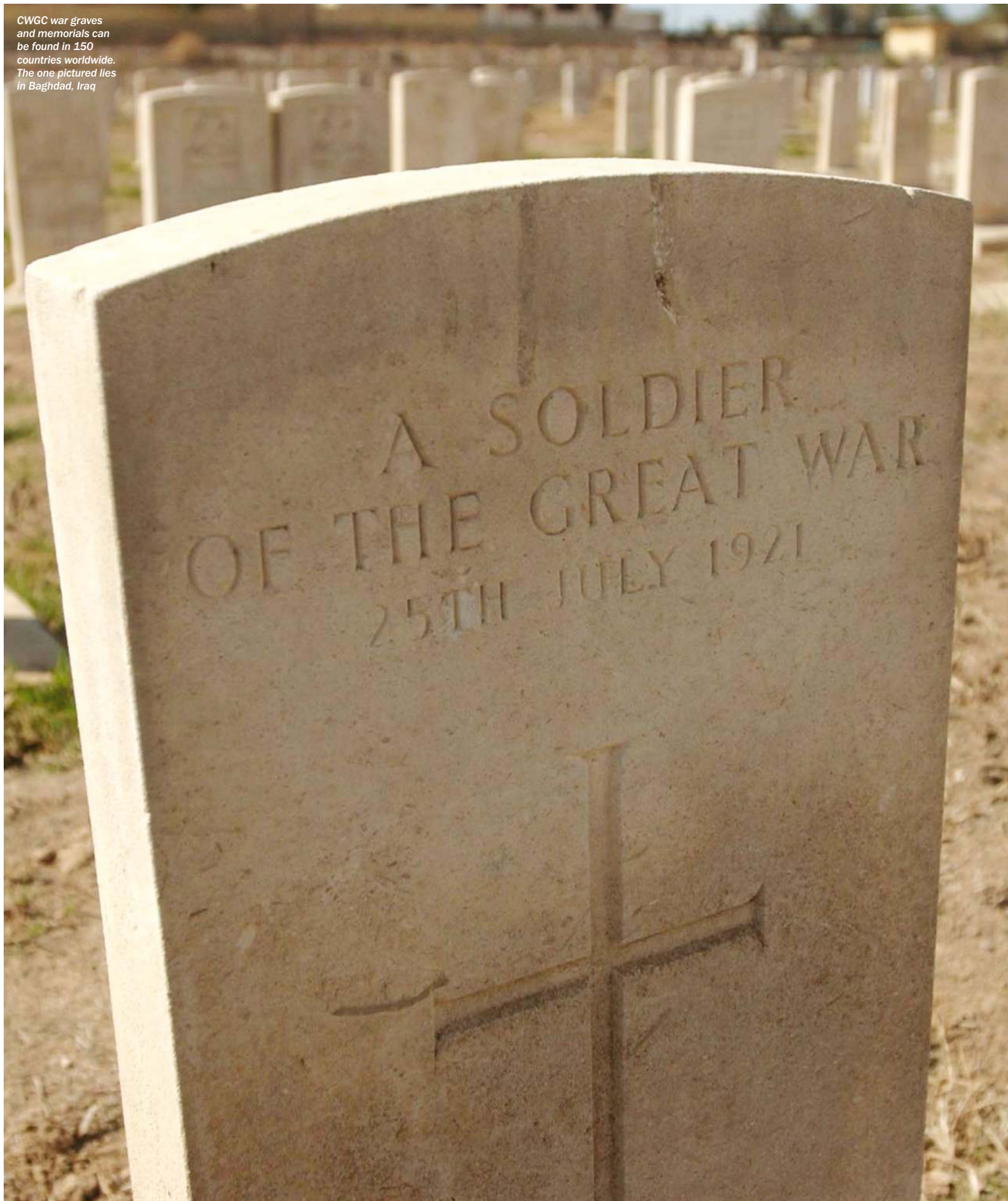
Victoria Wallace visiting the Pozieres British war memorial in Amiens, France with then-French president Francois Hollande and then-British prime minister David Cameron in March 2016



Members of the Women's Army Auxilliary Corps tending and maintaining British war graves in 1917



CWGC war graves and memorials can be found in 150 countries worldwide. The one pictured lies in Baghdad, Iraq





“THE LARGEST CEMETERY IS TYNE COT IN BELGIUM. IT IS THE SITE OF 12,000 GRAVES – THE DEAD FROM THE BATTLES FOR PASSCHENDAELE – AND IS CONVERSATION-STOPPING”

“Inevitably they would have found some way of sorting everything out,” said Victoria. “Somebody would have done something. I suspect it would have ended up staying within the army rather than becoming an independent organisation. I suspect it would have been done in a rather more workman-like way.”

After the war, Ware gave reasons behind his drive and determination. He said, “Common remembrance of the dead [of the Great War] is the one thing, sometimes the only thing, that never fails to bring our people together.”

The work took 20 years to complete. The final memorials were finished in 1938, just one year before the outbreak of World War II. There are now cemeteries and memorials in more than 150 countries, where 1.7 million service men and women who died in the two world wars are buried. The youngest was 14 years old, the oldest was 67.

The largest cemetery is Tyne Cot in Belgium. It is the site of 12,000 graves – the dead from the battles for Passchendaele – and is conversation-stopping.

The smallest cemetery is on Ocracoke Island, North Carolina in the USA, where four World War II British sailors are buried.

Big or small, it’s impossible to say which is the saddest, but perhaps the most heartbreaking are those that are tucked away where few footsteps fall. At Faffemont (Falfemont) Farm on the Somme there is the grave of three men from the London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers) killed on 10 September 1916. They are buried in a farmer’s field where they fell. There is no path, and when the crops are high, the graves are hidden from view.

Soldiers who have no known grave are named on memorials to the missing. The biggest is Thiepval, which stands 45 metres high and lists over 70,000 men lost on the Somme. In Ypres there are over 54,000 names inscribed on the Menin Gate. Each evening at 8pm crowds gather for the Last Post Ceremony which has been held here every day since 1928, except for an interlude during World War II.

When the killing of World War II began the commission was ready for the sad but vital role it had to play. When the fighting was over, 559 new cemeteries and 36 new memorials were added to the list.

So did Ware’s vision become a reality? Would people always remember? The CWGC now maintains war graves at 23,000 locations in 150 countries around the world so it’s impossible to know exactly how many people visit.

“Our best guess is around ten million visitors a year,” said Victoria. “We know for a fact that there are at least 500,000 a year who go to Tyne Cot and around 350,000 who go to Thiepval.”

Ten million annual visitors is an incredible figure. Would Ware be surprised at the huge numbers who still come to pay their respects, 100 years on? “I don’t think he would be surprised at all,” said Victoria confidently. “He took a view that this was something that was absolutely there for posterity. I think his vision was very much that this was something that future generations should continue – and would continue – to honour.”

Today visitors stand on grass as soft as velvet and admire the plants tended by the commission’s 850 gardeners. They read the



THE COMMITMENT CONTINUES 100 YEARS ON

AT 11AM ON 28 SEPTEMBER 2017 A CEREMONIAL BURIAL TOOK PLACE FOR 19 UNIDENTIFIED WORLD WAR I SOLDIERS AT THE CWGC’S NEW IRISH FARM CEMETERY TO THE NORTH EAST OF YPRES

A total of 22 bodies were uncovered during ground work at an industrial building site at Briekestraat, Ypres. The site was a wartime cemetery that was moved to another site just 300 metres away – but somehow these men were missed.

The men are among the many sets of remains still being recovered each year. They are found during building or road works or by farmers working the land.

“We recover possibly one a week,” said Victoria. “At the beginning of the summer we had about 110 bodies in the recovery units in France and Belgium, and we will probably end up with that number at the end of the year, even though we are still re-burying steadily. When you think there are 200,000 people listed on the walls of the Memorials to the Missing, just on the Western Front, I suppose it’s not altogether surprising.”

The identification process has changed considerably through the years, although it still requires a large degree of detective work to give the dead back their names.

“Sometimes it is impossible, especially when bodies are found with no historical context. It’s particularly sad if souvenir hunters have removed things like the insignia – then it becomes incredibly difficult to work out what nationality the person was.”

If the nationality of the person can be established, the next step is to find out when they might have been lost.

“Then you’ve got a chance to narrow it down,” explained Victoria, “because you’ve got the regimental rolls, and you know who went missing around that time and around that point. It’s only when you get to that point that you can say, OK, that’s probably someone from, for example, the York and Lancashire Regiment, because they were there on that date. Let’s have a look and see who was missing and who was never recovered. Then you end up with a handful of people – and then you can start to go down the route of calling for potential relatives and see whether DNA profiling is possible.”

The task of identification rests with the relevant government. In the case of these 19 men, it was the UK Ministry of Defence and their dedicated unit called the JCCC – the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre.

Of the 19 British soldiers, four served with the Essex Regiment, one with the Monmouthshire Regiment, one with the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, one with the Northumberland Regiment and one with the Royal Irish Regiment. The final 11 were ‘Known Unto God’.

“They were originally going to be burying all 22 men,” added Victoria, “But actually there’s quite a strong chance we may be able to make identification so we are holding off on that.”

These burials are likely to be the last of 2017 as winter weather will make further interments impractical. In the spring of 2018, almost a century after the end of the conflict, the CWGC’s work to bury the dead of World War I will begin again.

names and sigh at the sacrifice of a generation and feel anger at such waste. Many feel consoled by the care still given to the brave young men whose names will live forever thanks to the efforts of Fabian Ware.

Twice mentioned in dispatches and knighted in 1920, Sir Major General Fabian Ware died aged 79 on 29 April 1949 at his home in Amberley, Gloucestershire. He is buried in the Holy Trinity Churchyard, where his white Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone will always be cared for by the organisation he worked so hard to create.

Lieutenant Colonel Adrian
Carton de Wiart. He is
facing to his left to conceal
his missing eye



..... ●

“HE DISPLAYED THE UTMOST ENERGY AND COURAGE IN FORCING OUR ATTACK HOME. AFTER THREE OTHER BATTALION COMMANDERS HAD BECOME CASUALTIES, HE CONTROLLED THEIR COMMANDS AND ENSURED THAT THE GROUND WON WAS MAINTAINED AT ALL COSTS. HE FREQUENTLY EXPOSED HIMSELF IN THE ORGANISATION OF POSITIONS AND OF SUPPLIES, PASSING UNFLINCHINGLY THROUGH FIRE BARRAGE OF THE MOST INTENSE NATURE. HIS GALLANTRY WAS INSPIRING TO ALL”

VC citation

..... ●



Heroes of the Victoria Cross

ADRIAN CARTON DE WIART

Literally shot to pieces during his years of service in the British Army, the Belgian native Adrian Carton de Wiart earned Britain's highest honour for gallantry during the Somme Offensive

WORDS FRANK JASTRZEMSKI

When speaking of Sir Garnet Wolseley, Dr. Joseph H. Lehmann observed that the British general “believed the best possible way to get ahead in the army was to try to get killed every time he had a chance.” Wolseley had plenty of scars, medals and honours to show for it. Another soldier in the British Army, Adrian Carton de Wiart, lived by Wolseley's maxim. The transplanted Belgian-British army officer possessed a strange combination of a fiery temper, sense of humour in the darkest times, humility and an obsession to “justify his existence” through reckless heroism. His hairs-breadth escapes on the battlefield were legendary, and he would earn the Victoria Cross during the defence of La Boisselle in July 1916.

Born in Brussels, Belgium in May 1880, Adrian Carton de Wiart was never meant to be a soldier. His father, Carton de Wiart, a successful lawyer, moved his family to Cairo after the death of his wife. There he became a legal advisor to Khedive Tewfik. In 1888 he married an English woman, who ensured her new husband's children grew up to revere everything British.

In 1897 the 17-year-old de Wiart was sent to the University of Oxford to study law. Although well-versed in the French, English and Arabic languages, he failed as a student. He would rather be out playing cricket than hitting the books and hated the boundaries a university presented to his adventurous spirit.

When war broke out in Africa between the British Empire and the Boers in 1899, de Wiart abandoned his studies, feigned British citizenship, lied about his age and enlisted as a volunteer with Paget's Horse under the last name of Carton. “At that moment I knew, once and for all, that war was in my blood,” he professed later.

It was not long before the reckless Oxford dropout was wounded. He was shot in the stomach and groin by a Boer sharpshooter during a skirmish. Fearing he would be sent back to Oxford after his recovery, he pleaded with his father to allow him to remain in the British Army. With his son failing at his studies and with his mind locked on other ambitions, Carton de Wiart had no choice but to yield.

Rising to the rank of captain, de Wiart served in Somaliland in the run-up to Britain's entry into World War I. He was serving with ‘C’ Company of the Somaliland Camel Corps,

who had been tasked with crushing a Dervish force under the command of the Islamic leader Mohammed Abdullah Hassan – recognised among the British ranks as ‘Mad Mullah’.

During the assault on the six redoubts at Shamber Berris, de Wiart was wounded in his left eye and elbow, and he had a chunk of his ear torn off when a Dervish shot was fired at him from less than a yard away. Patched up by the surgeon, he returned to the fight. He received another wound to the same eye from a ricocheting bullet but remained in the field.

Captain de Wiart's badly damaged eye was subsequently removed after the action, though he resisted, fearful of what it could do to his military career. He received the Distinguished Service Order for his service at Shamber Berris. His only afterthought on facing death and losing his eye in Somaliland was, “It had all been exhilarating fun.”

He saw the loss of his eye as an opportunity rather than an end to his career. He was sent back to England to recuperate, frothing at the idea of being closer to the fighting on the Western Front. He appeared before the Medical Board to receive permission to return to active service. The examiners relented and allowed him to return to the field under the condition that he wore a glass eye. Following the board's approval, de Wiart tossed the annoying glass ball out of the window of a taxi, donning a black patch instead for the remainder of his life.

Back in action, this time on the Western Front, he was wounded in the left hand in an

“FRANKLY, I HAD ENJOYED THE WAR; IT HAD GIVEN ME MANY BAD MOMENTS, LOTS OF GOOD ONES, PLENTY OF EXCITEMENT...”

Adrian Carton de Wiart

artillery strike during the Second Battle of Ypres. This German shell fragment left his hand, in De Wiart's own words, a "gory mess". His left palm was gone and most of his wrist was shot away. Two of his fingers hung only by a thread of skin. The surgeon refused to remove his two remaining fingers, so de Wiart handled it himself, tearing them off. Sent back to England to recover, what remained of the heap of flesh that used to be his hand was amputated.

Yet again convincing the Medical Board examiners to allow him to return to the front (he argued he was still able to shoot and fish), de Wiart transferred from the cavalry to an infantry battalion. Now a lieutenant colonel, he took command of the 8th Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment. The unit was badly in need of field officers, prompting de Wiart to seek service in the infantry, where he would have a greater chance for distinction. He returned to the front just in time to play a vital role in the Somme Offensive in July 1916.

The French village of La Boisselle was an imposing obstacle for General William

"HE IS A MODEL OF CHIVALRY AND HONOUR"

Winston Churchill

Pulteney's III Corps. The Germans turned each wrecked home and building in the village into a mini citadel, with all approaches covered by machine gun crews – some of the best-trained soldiers in the German army. Two mines were detonated under the German lines by engineers in the hope they would throw the German defenders into a state of confusion.

During the first two days of fighting between Fricourt and La Boisselle the 21st Division made progress and forced the Germans back. But on the division's left, the 34th and 8th Divisions of the III Corps made little headway at La Boisselle against the German 28th Reserve and 26th Reserve Divisions.

On 2 July fresh reinforcements from the 19th Division, originally held in reserve, led to the British securing a foothold within La Boisselle. Lieutenant Colonel de Wiart's battalion, alongside the 10th Warwicks, were called up to support the battered Eighth North Staffords and 10th Worcesters. De Wiart described the disarray in the village: "La Boisselle was a truly bloody scene. The casualties had been appalling: there were dead everywhere, not a house standing and the ground as flattened as if the very soul had been blasted out of the earth and turned into a void." Together, these combined British units wrestled, metre-by-metre, trenches from the Germans. By 6pm de Wiart was placed in command of all the units in La Boisselle – the other three senior battalion commanders were either dead or wounded.

A good portion of the village was in the hands of the British by next morning. De Wiart received orders from his division commander, General Tom Bridges – a daring character himself – to hold on to La Boisselle at all costs. The Germans counterattacked the same

Soldiers of the 10th Worcesters bringing in German prisoners captured during the fight for La Boisselle





Above: British soldiers in a trench near La Boisselle. Captain de Wiart wrote, "La Boisselle was a truly bloody scene"



day at 8.30am. The author Everard Wyrall, in his history *The 19th Division*, declared that this German counterattack "led to what was probably the most intense fighting the Division had up to that period experienced." The battalions were forced halfway back through the village by 12.30pm. It looked as if the British would be driven from the ground they had fought so hard to capture.

Lieutenant Colonel de Wiart's men dug in around some hedges and fought to defend every inch of ground. Armed with only his walking stick, de Wiart inspired his men with his trademark calm under fire. Disregarding German artillery shells and bullets (miraculously dodging sniper bullets), he filled his men with admiration. With his only good arm, de Wiart yanked the pins from his Mills grenades out with his teeth, lobbing them at groups of onrushing German soldiers. It is hard to imagine what these German soldiers expressed to one another when they witnessed this crippled warrior with a pinned-up sleeve and a black eyepatch hurling grenades in their direction. His heroism and inspirational leadership motivated his men to hold their lines and allowed the British to secure La Boisselle by 5 July.

Around 3,500 men from the 19th Division fell in the fighting at La Boisselle. Adrian Carton de Wiart was one of three members of the division to be awarded the Victoria Cross. His citation, printed in the *London Gazette* on 9 September 1916, gave an admirable evaluation of his deeds.

Adrian Carton de Wiart was wounded a total of eight times before the close of the

war and rose to the rank of brigadier general. He was invested by King George V with the Victoria Cross on 29 November 1916. He had met the king once before: while visiting British soldiers on the front line, King George ran into the eccentric officer. Striking up a conversation with the king, the Belgian thought it was an appropriate time to crack a joke. He commented on the irony that he had served in the British Army for ten years without being a British subject. King George, not pleased at all with de Wiart's remark, asked that he see to it that he rectify the issue of his citizenship.

Adrian Carton de Wiart continued in the service of the British Army for another 29 years. During the interwar years he served as a military attaché in Poland, narrowly escaping a Cossack ambush during the Soviet invasion of 1920. During World War II he commanded the Central Norwegian Expeditionary Force in 1940 and headed the British Military Mission in Yugoslavia in 1941. He was captured by the Italians after being shot down over the Mediterranean, escaped through a tunnel during his imprisonment but was recaptured. After his release, he served as Winston Churchill's representative to Nationalist China in October 1943.

The 'unkillable soldier' died in Ireland in June 1963. General de Wiart never viewed his life as adventurous but rather full of "misadventures". He declared in his autobiography years later, "That I should have survived them is to me by far the most interesting thing about it." He seemed to be one of those rare individuals who had a knack for eluding death but who also enjoyed facing it.

"IT MAY BE FOUND THAT MAJOR GENERAL DE WIART ONCE MORE OUT-HOLLYWOODED HOLLYWOOD"

Army News, 16 September 1943



A fragment of a silver penny from the reign of Æthelstan. Some of his coins bore the legend 'Rex To Bri', which translates as 'king of all Britain'

ÆTHELSTAN

&

ENGLAND'S FIRST GREAT WAR AN INTERVIEW WITH MICHAEL WOOD

Historian and broadcaster Michael Wood reveals how Alfred the Great's forgotten grandson became the first king of all England and won a hugely significant war to secure his fledgling realm

WORDS TOM GARNER

When King Æthelstan died in 939, an Irish chronicler hailed his legacy in mighty tones: "Æthelstan, king of the English died,

the roof tree of the honour of the western world." This acclamation was remarkable for several reasons. First, many Irishmen had actually attempted – and failed – to topple the king in a devastating campaign in 937. Second, Æthelstan was recognised as 'king of the English' by his enemies, when only two generations previously the Anglo-Saxon people had faced complete annihilation. Third, the chronicler's praise was well founded: Æthelstan was indeed revered throughout Western Europe.

Æthelstan (popularly known to history as 'Aethelstan') was the grandson of Alfred the Great, and from 924 to his death in 939 he unified the disparate Anglo-Saxons to create a truly unified kingdom of England for the first time. He was the eldest son of King Edward the

Elder, but his mother was a concubine, and his accession to 'king of the Anglo-Saxons' was by no means guaranteed. Nevertheless, once he gained power he fought relentless campaigns against his Viking and Celtic enemies within Britain and forced them all to submit to his overlordship in 927. He became 'Emperor of the world of Britain', and his rapid conquests bred great resentment among his enemies that culminated in a 'Great War' in 937.

Led by Anlaf Guthfrithson, the Viking king of Dublin and Constantine II, king of Scots, an unprecedented alliance of Vikings and Celtic peoples from across the British Isles invaded northern England and captured York. Although the details are uncertain, Æthelstan eventually raised an army and comprehensively defeated the invaders in what was described as an "immense, lamentable and horrible" battle at 'Brunanburh'. Although the location of this mysterious battlefield remains unknown, it was nevertheless decisive. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* described how Æthelstan's warriors, "eager for glory, overcame the Britons and won a country." In other words, the new kingdom of England was secured.

Despite his importance to English and British history Æthelstan is a largely forgotten king in

the popular imagination. Now, 1,080 years after the warrior-king's great victory at Brunanburh, the historian, broadcaster and Anglo-Saxon expert Michael Wood reveals an England that was ravaged by decades of savage conflict and a monarch whose military achievements made him "renowned through the wide world."

"A SOCIETY GEARED TO WAR"

To what extent does Æthelstan bear comparison to his grandfather Alfred the Great and his other forebears in creating the kingdom of England?

I view it as a family project over three generations. The kingdom [of Wessex] was nearly overrun in 878 before the Battle of Edington and Alfred, from a very small base, created a 'kingdom of the Anglo-Saxons', which was a union of the Mercians and West Saxons.

Alfred's son Edward and daughter Æthelflæd then worked together in one of the greatest combined operations in the whole of Dark Ages warfare when they reduced the Danelaw up to the River Humber. Æthelstan must have fought in those wars from the age of 15 onwards, but we just don't know.

We know from the surviving fragments that he was trained as a warrior. One source says he was "invincible like a thunderbolt" so he probably had a lot of experience of war in all those battles in the East and West Midlands fighting the Vikings.

Left: Michael Wood is one of the most prominent experts on Æthelstan and has made documentaries about the king for the BBC, including episodes of 'In Search of the Dark Ages' and 'King Alfred and the Anglo-Saxons'



MIGHTY IN WAR... VICTORIOUS THROUGH GOD

King Æthelstan as he might have appeared at the height of his powers in the 930s. His appearance is based on a surprisingly rich blend of primary source descriptions, archaeological finds and even a portrait.

Chroniclers described the king as, "medium in height, slender in body, his hair flaxen," while his personality was "charming and well disposed to churchmen, affable and kind to laymen." He was known to be "audacious and forceful, much beloved by his subjects for his courage and humility and like a thunderbolt to rebels with his invincible steadfastness." It was said that Æthelstan could rule "by terror in his name alone."

Æthelstan's general appearance is based on a remarkable contemporary

portrait of him from a manuscript of the *Venerable Bede's Life of Saint Cuthbert*, which includes his face, a long green cloak and a simple crown. Additionally, parts of his accessories are speculatively based on earlier archaeological artefacts from the Anglo-Saxon period. These include theommel of his sword, belt buckle and shoulder clasp, which are based on finds from the Staffordshire Hoard and excavations at Sutton Hoo.

What emerges is a multifaceted monarch who seemingly embodied all the key virtues required for Anglo-Saxon kingship - he was both pious and warlike. Consequently, Æthelstan is depicted holding both a sword and religious book of the period to emphasise his reputation for martial prowess, godliness and learning.



Æthelstan (left) presents a book to Saint Cuthbert, from an illustration of the *Venerable Bede's Life of Saint Cuthbert*. This rare image is the earliest surviving portrait of an English monarch

The British Isles as depicted in the Anglo-Saxon 'Cotton' world map. Created around 1025-50, this is the first relatively realistic depiction of Britain and Ireland



Illustration: Jean-Michel Girard, The Art Agency





A miniature of Saint Matthew in gospels presented by Æthelstan to Christ Church Priory

“WHEN YOU COME INTO ÆTHELSTAN’S YOUTH AND TEENS THERE ARE MAJOR BATTLES AND DEVASTATION RIGHT DOWN THE COUNTRY SO IT WAS A VERY, VERY UNSTABLE TIME”

A very reliable source says that Æthelstan was brought up by Æthelflæd in Mercia. He knew the Mercian aristocracy, and that alliance was crucial to his ability to carry the Mercian aristocracy with him when he became king of the English.

In 927 Æthelstan invaded and conquered Northumbria and forced all the kings of Britain to submit to him. He became not only the king of all the English but also the king of all Britain. It's an extraordinary idea.

How devastating were the Viking raids and campaigns in Anglo-Saxon England during the early 10th century?

If you want to know what is in Æthelstan's head, it would be the knowledge of what had happened in his grandfathers' and parents' generation. Wessex had nearly fallen, and there was this great royal family story of Alfred fighting in the marshes of Athelney. They really saw it as the salvation of England.

When you come into Æthelstan's youth and teens there are major battles and devastation right down the country so it was a very, very unstable time. There are odd sources, such as a letter from the bishop of Winchester to King Edward saying, "We cannot possibly pay any

more taxes. The estate here has only got 90 animals left. The Viking raids and the weather have destroyed us. The raids have depopulated the villages and the landscape: we beg you for no more exactions." They're talking about an estate within a few hours of Winchester, which was the so-called capital [of Wessex] so these little hints tell you that nowhere was safe. That's why I would argue that the result was a society geared to war.

What was the condition of England when Æthelstan came to power as 'king of the Anglo-Saxons' in 924?

The condition of England was that north of the Humber there was a Viking-ruled kingdom of York that joined the kingdom of Dublin. The same kings from the same clan ruled both, and it is possible that the kingdom of Lindsey in what is now the bulk of Lincolnshire was also under their power.

In 924 Edward died on a campaign to suppress a Mercian revolt, and his heir was not Æthelstan but Ælfweard. He was slightly younger than Æthelstan but was the son of Edward's first queen, whereas Æthelstan was the son of a concubine. Ælfweard had been proclaimed as king not long before his father

died so they must have known that his father was slipping. He was invested with the regalia of his office, but he died 16 days after his father. At that point the Mercians proclaimed Æthelstan as king and that's the great conundrum, because the Mercians proclaim him as king of Mercia, not Wessex. It takes a year for that to be resolved with Wessex, so there is clearly a succession crisis.

It wasn't guaranteed that Mercia and Wessex would stick together but because Æthelstan was favoured by the Mercians and was a West Saxon prince he trod both paths.

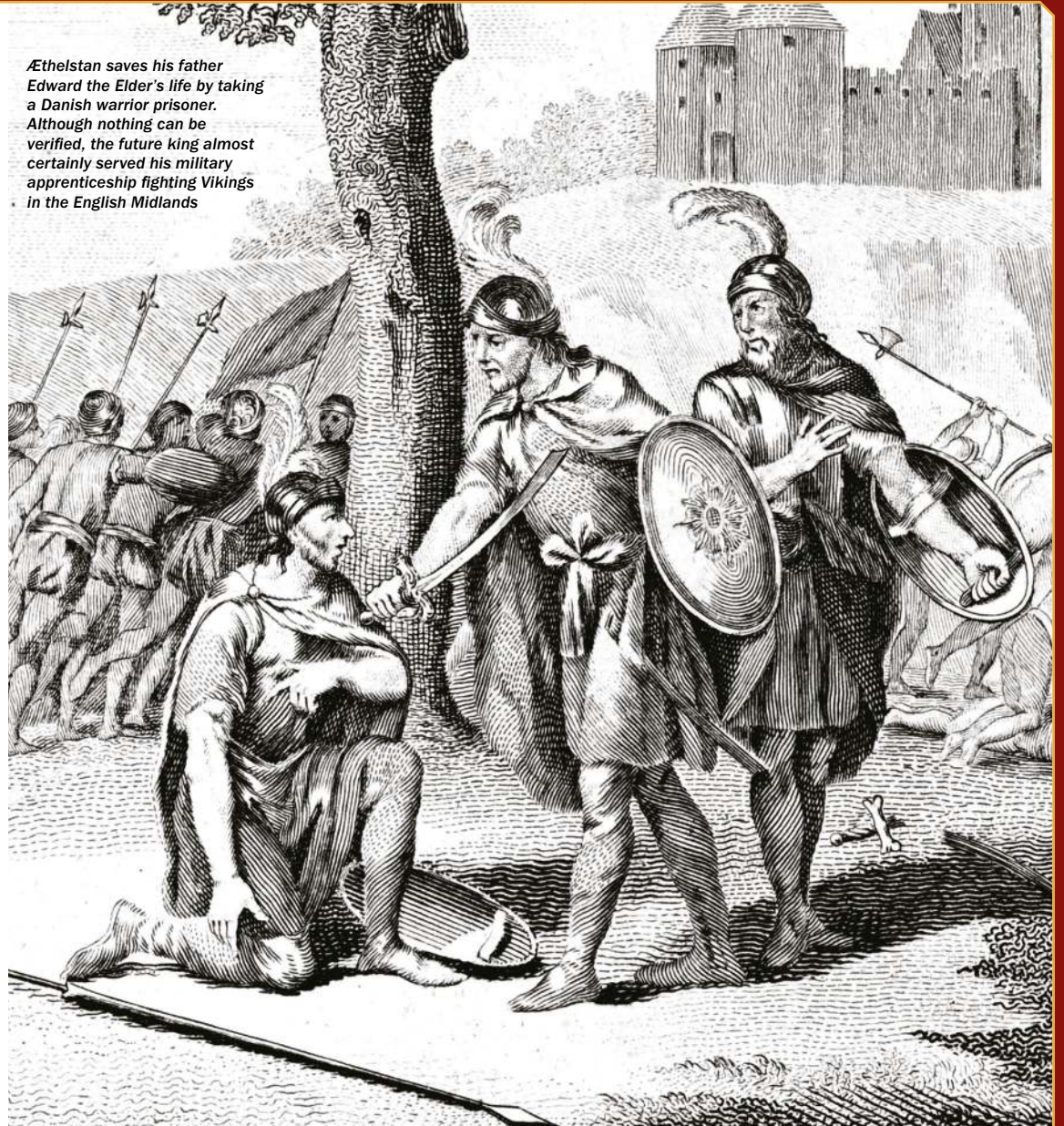
How significant were Æthelstan's military conquests and campaigns during the years 927-28 and 934?

The first campaign that he fought as king was after the death of his sister's husband, the Viking king of York. Æthelstan seized York, demolished the fortifications, and there may well have been fighting. Æthelstan then marched on to Cumbria, and at Eamont Bridge the kings of the Scots, Strathclyde Welsh, Cumbrians and the other northern kingdoms have to submit to him. The Welsh kings probably submitted at Hereford, and there's even a suggestion that the kings in Cornwall –

Æthelstan's grandfather Alfred the Great. Alfred once presented his young grandson with the regalia of kingship, including a royal cloak and a Saxon sword and belt



Æthelstan saves his father Edward the Elder's life by taking a Danish warrior prisoner. Although nothing can be verified, the future king almost certainly served his military apprenticeship fighting Vikings in the English Midlands



the 'West Welsh' – also submit. All of the kings in Britain submitted to Æthelstan.

That first campaign of 927 was a kind of blitzkrieg, and Æthelstan probably moved down to the Welsh borders near Hereford and further down to the south west, so you can reconstruct this incredible tour around Britain where he enforces an 'Empire of Britain' with an army. Æthelstan became the most powerful ruler since the Romans, and that uneasy overlordship survived until 933 when the Scots renounced their allegiance.

In 934 Æthelstan assembled a great army at Winchester and they then invaded Scotland. A Durham source said that they went along the east coast past Aberdeen and as far as the Moray Firth. The naval expedition that went alongside it went as far as Caithness and devastated it, including perhaps the Viking

settlements there. It's a sudden revelation of a military force that you never could have expected ten to 30 years earlier. It's an incredible operation and extremely ambitious. They hit the most northern point of Britain, which hadn't been done perhaps since Agricola.

Æthelstan re-established the overlordship, but it's probably the event that led the Scots to put out feelers and say, "We've got to do something about this." It ultimately led to the great coalition of 937.

ANGLO-SAXON ARMIES

What were Æthelstan's traditional military duties as king?

The Anglo-Saxons expected a king to be a leader in war. The epithets of kingship that you see in the poems, such as the famous one about the Battle of Brunanburh, refer to the

"giver of rings", the "lord of warriors", and the "plunder lord". You were expected to lead the army, and the king's presence with the army was vital for its leadership.

The royal army, which went on the expeditionary campaign all the way up to Scotland in 934, was a mounted army. The core was the leadership, and there were about 140 major thegns [landowning warriors] in Æthelstan's time, and all of them had retinues. They would each have had several estates, and they could probably take quite large retinues with them. We have no idea about the size of an Anglo-Saxon royal army in the 10th century, but it was several thousand men.

How were armies structured and raised by Anglo-Saxon kings in the early 10th century?

We know so little about 10th-century warfare, but law codes talk about the obligation of landowners who receive land from the king to provide military service, including at least one mounted man for every plough, so that's a massive military obligation.

When you think of an Anglo-Saxon royal army you can of course also have a local army, and that might be led by a local earl. If a shire was attacked the local thegn or ealdorman would

"HE ENFORCES AN 'EMPIRE OF BRITAIN' WITH AN ARMY. ÆTHELSTAN BECAME THE MOST POWERFUL RULER SINCE THE ROMANS, AND THAT UNEASY OVERLORDSHIP SURVIVED UNTIL 933 WHEN THE SCOTS RENOUNCED THEIR ALLEGIANCE"

A 1913 illustration of the Battle of Brunanburh by Welsh artist Morris Meredith Williams. Although it was a decisive victory for Æthelstan, the casualties were reported to be huge on both sides



send his leaders out to the 'hundreds' [regional divisions] of the shire, and the people who owed military service would be brought in with their equipment. They had some rough kind of training, but they were good enough to be directed by the few professional warriors [the thegns] of the shire to fight Viking attacks.

What weaponry and equipment would have been used at battles such as Brunanburh?

The word 'knight' is Anglo-Saxon, and we think of it as late medieval, but it's Anglo-Saxon, and a thegn would have had his own equipment, including spears, a shield, sword, helmet, probably mail body armour and a horse and spare mounts. They formed a really strong and well-armoured nucleus of the army.

The thegns had really ace equipment, and the weaponry in their wills describe the value of their blades and hilts. You've only got to look at the Staffordshire Hoard, where you've got dozens of aristocratic hilt decorations from an earlier period, to see that it was portable wealth. These are really valuable possessions that could have included inlaid armour and ornamental helmets.

We haven't got any surviving examples from the 10th century, but you can imagine that you're dealing with an aristocratic elite who are trained for war. They've gone through military training, and the army leaders have probably read tactical books by Vegetius or other Latin texts that exist from Anglo-Saxon England. It's quite likely that they actually read classical texts on how to conduct feigned retreats, for example.

It's also hard to imagine that the army going up to invade Northumbria in 927 didn't have a large baggage train with possibly mobile siege towers and portable bridges. We don't know, but they must have had these kinds of things, and they are described in the Siege of Paris with Viking armies. You can't conduct campaigns like that to besiege York and destroy the Viking fortifications [without them]. They must have had the equipment to do this because these are active stormings rather than a siege where you sit and starve them out.

What is known about the common soldiers who fought below the rank of thegn?

We just don't know, but I'm sure we underestimate the Anglo-Saxons' tactical ability: coordination, messaging separate units to join together on a particular day in a specific place, and coordinating night or surprise attacks was very common.

The Battle of Cynwit in 878 in north Devon is really interesting because Alfred was in deep trouble in Athelney, and the main Viking army was in north Wiltshire. Instead, the ealdorman of Devon, Odda, raised a force from the shire. It was not a royal army, but the Vikings suffered 800 dead, so it was a sizeable force. Odda was able to marshal a shire army that included enough people who in their normal lives were farmers but who had military training and would take orders from the leadership. You've got to have discipline and order in an army: they were not just a load of peasants who sat down and drank beer. They were able to outmanoeuvre the Viking army, storm their defences and take them by surprise. All these things suggest trained leaders.

THE 'GREAT WAR'

What were the causes of the 'Great War' of 937, and where does the term come from?

A chronicler called Æthelweard, who was an ealdorman in Somerset, was writing in about 980, and it's quite likely that his ancestors fought at Brunanburh. He said that right up to his day men in the street would refer to the 'Magnum Bellum', which can be safely translated as the 'Great Battle', but it is also conceivable that it can actually mean the 'Great War'.

The only reason I raise that translation is that we simply don't know the scale of the war. It may not just be a battle. It may be that the whole of the north was in chaos, that the devastation went right down into the Midlands, that losses were absolutely gigantic or that the war continued into the next year. There are later traditions of Æthelstan that say the Scots and Picts submitted, and a Scottish source says that he sent an army north in 938. The scale of the fighting is something we just don't know, although I think 'Great Battle' is more likely.

The cause of it was obviously the English empire and Æthelstan's aggressive policies towards Britain. This included his determination to wipe out an independent kingdom of Northumbria run by Vikings from a Dublin clan. It was also immediately incited by his aggression in 934 with the army and the fleet going all the way up Scotland. At that point his enemies decided to combine.

What is known about the alliance led by Anlaf Guthfrithson and Constantine II of Scotland against Æthelstan in 937?

Two sources say that Constantine was the instigator, and he had married a daughter to the Viking king of Dublin, Anlaf Guthfrithson.

**“THEY WERE ABLE TO
OUTMANOEUVRE THE VIKING
ARMY, STORM THEIR DEFENCES
AND TAKE THEM BY SURPRISE”**



Æthelstan's father King Edward the Elder as depicted in a 13th-century genealogical scroll. Edward and his sister Æthelflæd pushed the Vikings further north by capturing the East Midlands and East Anglia

There's a very interesting source, the most famous of all Welsh prophetic poems, the *Armes Prydein* (the Great Prophecy of Britain) that calls for an alliance of all the Vikings, Irish, Norse Irish, Dublin Vikings, the Cumbrian Strathclyde, Welsh, Cornish and everybody else to join together to defeat "the Great King".

The specificity of the reference in the poem is key and suggests that by the summer of 934 a Welsh poet in Dyfed knew that people were calling for this alliance against Æthelstan to get the whole manpower of the Celtic fringe to join together to defeat him, and of course that is what happened in 937.

Their intention was probably not to march down to Winchester – that's not the agenda. But what they would do either by treaty or battle was to restore the kingdom of York and to say, "Northumbria is our land, and your kingdom stops there." Whether they wanted to say it stopped at Watling Street rather than the Humber is another matter, but the restoration of the kingdom of York was ultimately what they were after. That would have also ensured that the Scots wouldn't have to endure English armies attacking them again.

We are still trying to piece together the evidence, but in Viking terms their force was massive. When it's said that "many thousands" were killed that's from a very realistic source. A Northumbrian source says that 615 ships was the size of the fleet that went into the Humber. That's not the Scottish and the North British armies coming overland, that's just the combined Viking fleet. 615 ships is the biggest Viking fleet ever in the British Isles.

How did the invasion of Æthelstan's territories unfold in 937?

The answer is we don't know, and I'm the first person to attempt a tentative construction that is really based on the available sources. One is this source by William of Malmesbury, who gives an extended quotation from a lost poem that was dismissed as just being made up in the 12th century. When you look at it closely it's not, and there's no doubt that what he says is a verbatim quote from a lost source.

It's incredibly informative and clearly comes from a time not long after Æthelstan's death. It simply says that the Northumbrians submitted to the invaders under Anlaf Guthfrithson, so that tells you that it's in York or in the region of York. That then enables you to see how the rest unfolded, because other sources say they eventually gave battle with the help of Danes who were settled in England. That can only be in Northumbria or the East Midlands.

William's source says that the invaders devastated widely with terrible destruction. The fields were burned, the ravaging and the looting was terrible – it was horrendous. At some point York submitted, and the invading army must have gathered somewhere on the Northumbrian border, because the fleet had landed in the Humber. From there the invaders mounted expeditions into the Midlands, but is it just plundering expeditions or an actual invasion? That's what we don't know.

The really interesting thing that then comes from the same quotation (which proves how contemporary it is) is that Æthelstan had previously been swift to act during danger.

Æthelstan's empty tomb in Malmesbury Abbey. The effigy dates from the 15th century, but the king's remains were lost during the English Reformation

“THE LOSSES IN THE IRISH LEADERSHIP AND THE IRISH-VIKING ARMY WERE HUGE, AND IT DOES SUGGEST THAT A SIZEABLE PART OF THE ARMY WAS CUT DOWN ON THE FIELD”

He was brilliant – invincible – and never let his enemies rest, but now he seems to have almost wasted time. It was as if he deemed his service done while they ravaged everywhere and caused such destruction. That has to be contemporary and contrasts with rather homiletic sources where the king's job was to be “seated on a high watchtower ever vigilant.”

There's no doubt that that's a real source telling you that Æthelstan, for all his great reputation, at this moment was strongly criticised for not immediately responding to the invasion. What you guess, and what the source actually says, is that he bided his time, presumably to gather more forces. Harold II did the wrong thing in 1066 by charging down from Stamford Bridge and immediately attacking [at Hastings], but Æthelstan wasn't going to let that happen. He risked the devastation of stretches of his territory to make sure that he'd got enough forces to combat this. So that is how I would tentatively reconstruct it, but it is of course pure speculation.

THE BATTLE OF BRUNANBURH

What is known about the events of the battle itself?

Not much actually. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* suggests that the West Saxons pursued the North British all through the day after the defeat, but that's just a poetic phrase and it may not mean anything. It almost suggests that the Mercians and the Viking army fought it out on the field for much longer, but that's maybe reading too much into the evidence. Certainly the losses in the Irish leadership and the Irish-Viking army were huge, and it does suggest that a sizeable part of the army was cut down on the field.

However, everyone agrees that it was a gigantic battle. The *Annals of Ulster* says it was “immense, lamentable and horrible” and savagely fought. “Many thousands” of the Viking army were killed, and a “multitude” of

the English were killed as well, so they have some knowledge of what happened. Anlaf Guthfrithson only escaped with “a few” so it's an absolutely gigantic defeat and resonated in lots of sources.

What is known about the casualties of the battle on both sides?

There are various accounts of bishops and nobles that were killed on the Anglo-Saxon side. One story names two of Æthelstan's cousins as being killed, and they were buried at Malmesbury in Wiltshire.

There is a strong York tradition that Æthelstan founded Saint Leonard's Hospital around that time, and one tradition says that it was after the battle. Was this an expiation of his sins for having killed so many people, or doing something nice for the Northumbrians? Who knows, and I haven't been able to prove it yet.

On the Viking side the casualties included five kings and seven earls. The heir to the king of Scots was killed, and there is an Irish source that lists a lot of the dead. The aristocracy bore the brunt of the fighting in some of these battles, and they led by example. If things went wrong then the losses could be massive. Losses in leaders were often very heavy, and they definitely were at Brunanburh.

How did Æthelstan's contemporaries receive the victory at Brunanburh?

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which was written two years after Æthelstan's death in 939, says it was the greatest victory since the Angles and the Saxons first came over the wide seas to Britain to win themselves a kingdom. That's the historical context that they see it under, and there's quite a few other sources that see it in that light. It goes into folk legend, late medieval sagas, hagiography, miracle stories and right down to Elizabethan drama. It became a great source of legend so it's a big story.

A POWERFUL LEGACY

Could it be argued that 937 is as important as 1066 in early medieval English history?

I wouldn't say it was as important as 1066 because that was a catastrophic rupture, but it is one of the great decisive moments in early British history. The historian Frank Stenton said that the victory at Brunanburh wasn't as decisive for the future as the Battle of Edington [in 878] but of course if Æthelstan had lost, been killed and his leadership wiped out then it would have been a very different story.

What was the impact of Æthelstan's reign and his victory at Brunanburh?

Æthelstan died two years later, and his empire in the north immediately collapsed. Although it was fairly rapidly restored they did have to fight another 20 years to make sure that Northumbria became a part of the kingdom of the English.

His reign left a template for a kingdom of all the English, including the regal styles and the titles. He pretty much established that, up to the Humber, Northumbria would be a part of the English kingdom. A lot of his ideas proved useful to the future, including his lawmaking, a coinage for the whole realm and even extending Alfred's translation program. Æthelstan was really ambitious and saw himself as a late Carolingian king.

It is a premature kingdom of all the English but it is there, and later generations always saw him as the first king even though he possibly overreached himself in many ways. His model was probably [Saint] Bede's “gens Anglorum”: the English people. These can include Mercians, West Saxons, people of Danish descent, Cornish, Welsh people and speakers on the English side of Offa's Dyke. It was a nation, as one 10th century source says, of many different languages, customs, costumes and so on. In a sense, it's a visionary kingdom based on Bede's blueprint that Alfred then dreamed up and Æthelstan brought into being.

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WORDS TOM GARNER

THE SIEGE OF

JADOTVILLE

PART III: THE FORGOTTEN VICTORY

In the last of three interviews with Irish UN veterans, Tony Dykes reveals how he survived not only the initial siege, but also a subsequent battle against his attackers in the capital of Katanga



Left: Tony Dykes's United Nations photo ID, which was issued shortly before he was deployed to the Congo



Irish UN peacekeepers at Elisabethville Airport during the Congo Crisis. After the Siege of Jadotville Tony Dykes fought with other members of A Company to keep the airport in UN hands

Private Tony Dykes (back row, fourth from left) when he had finished training at Custume Barracks, 1959. Lieutenant Noel Carey is seated front row, fifth from right



The Siege of Jadotville is one of the most remarkable stories in Irish military history. Between 13-17 September 1961, 156 inexperienced United Nations peacekeepers of A Company, 35th Irish Infantry Battalion fought a heroic defence in the Congo against 2,000-4,000 armed secessionist Katangese gendarmeries and mercenaries.

Against all the odds not one member of A Company was killed, while 300-400 of their attackers became fatalities, and approximately 1,000 were wounded. However, the remarkable efforts of the Irish soldiers, led by Commandant Patrick 'Pat' Quinlan, were not fully supported by the UN high command, and the garrison was eventually surrounded and forced into a tense captivity by the Katangans. They were eventually released in late October 1961.

A Company's bravery was not just confined to Jadotville (now Likasi): after they were released from captivity approximately 95-100 members of the company came under attack in the Katangan capital of Elisabethville (now Lubumbashi) before they were scheduled to return to Ireland in December 1961.

Known as the 'Second Battle of Katanga' this fierce fight was the UN's attempt to clear rebel gendarmeries and mercenaries from enemy roadblocks around Elisabethville Airport and restore freedom of movement. 58 members of A Company had already flown home on 28 November, so it was left to the remnants of the veterans of Jadotville to face their attackers once more.

Working with Swedish and Indian peacekeepers, A Company led the vanguard and once again inflicted many casualties under Pat Quinlan's command without losing a single man. Along with substantial UN air support, the mercenaries and gendarmeries were comprehensively defeated, and many surrendered. The remainder of A Company finally returned home just before Christmas in 1961.

Among those battle-weary troops was Private Tony Dykes. Born in 1941, Dykes was 19 years old when he was deployed to the Congo and tells the gritty but forgotten story of how A Company finally inflicted a satisfying victory over their formidable foes.

A peacekeeping 'policeman'

When did you join the Irish Army?

I joined as an ordinary recruit in 1959. A neighbour of mine called Frank MacManus – who was at Jadotville with me – said, "Come on, we're off!" I went to Custume Barracks at Athlone with him, and he was supposed to get £10 for any person that he brought with him. I'm still waiting on that £10!

What did your training consist of?

It was mundane training for six months. We were square-bashing with the Lee Enfield .303 rifle, would you believe it! That's what we went out to the Congo with. I also learned [how to use] the Bren gun, a mortar and the Gustav, which was a short close-fighting gun. I was a 'three star' soldier, and that was as far as I went. It meant that you'd passed the test in assembling and disassembling your weapons. We were then allocated to companies, and I was transferred to Curragh Camp. They put me in the cadet school in the officers' mess as a barman, which was a cushy job.

What did you know about the Congo before you were deployed?

Absolutely nothing. I volunteered to go to the Congo because the job I was doing was getting a bit mundane. I had to keep saluting every officer I met and was getting a bit peed off with that so I volunteered. Luckily I was selected to go so it was off with the kitbag and back to Custume Barracks.

We didn't know how much turmoil there was in Africa, and we didn't know about its politics. We also didn't know what the UN policy was

apart from one, which was, "We're going out there as peacekeepers and policemen." We were told that we weren't going out into a war; we were going to placate the civilians out there as policemen.

How did it feel to be a UN peacekeeper?

It felt good because we were going out there as raw recruits, and we were only young. I was 19, and to be a 'policeman' held some power in the sense that we had a little bit of responsibility.

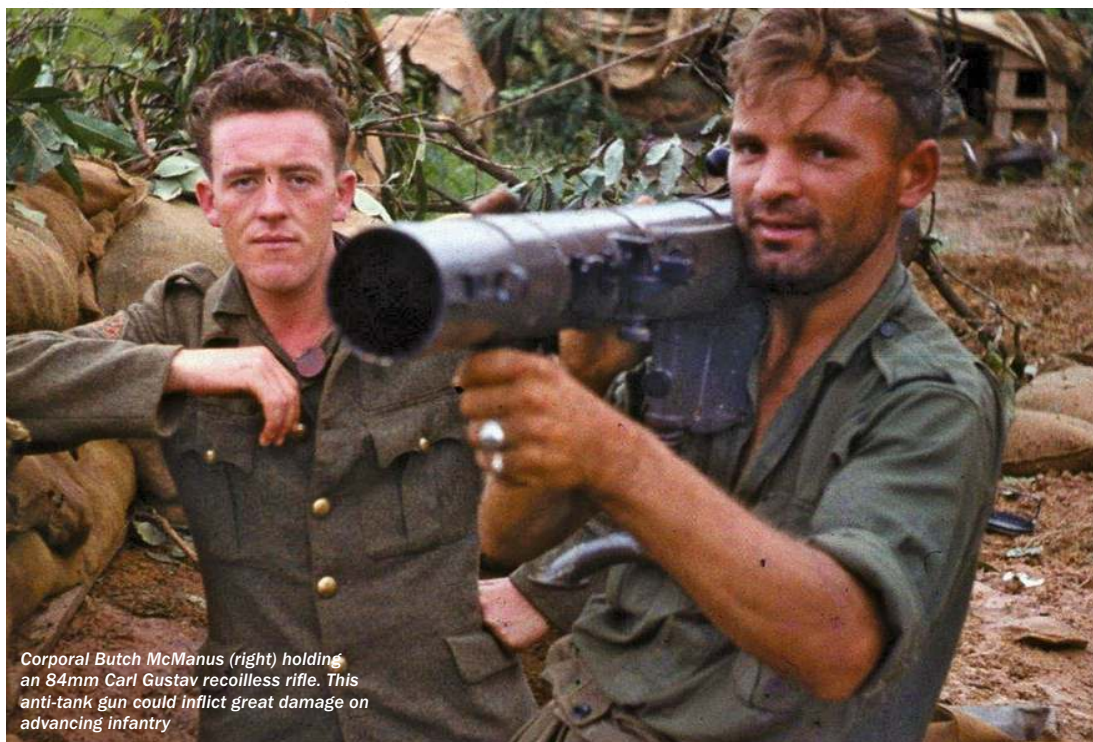
Under siege

What were the circumstances that led to A Company being sent to Jadotville?

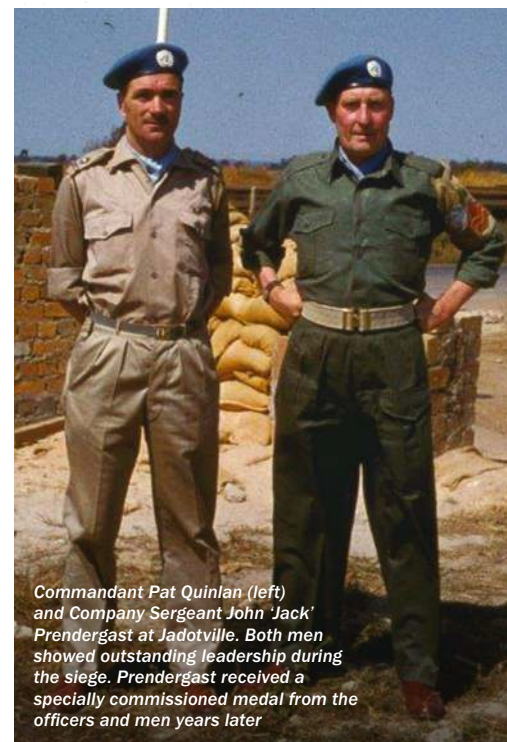
We were camped at Elisabethville Airport. I remember going to a place called Kamina, and we had to put bars across the runway because the Russians were trying to interfere with what the UN was doing.

B Company, 35th Irish Battalion plus Swedish troops first went to Jadotville. Within 24-48 hours they came back, and word filtered down to us that the people didn't want them there. All we were told was, "Pack your kitbags, we're going out to Jadotville." What we didn't know – and it was the most vital information – was that there was a bridge between Jadotville and Elisabethville at Lufira. We were never told about it.

We didn't go with heavy mortars, and there was nothing to tell us we'd be in trouble. We were sent out in lieu of a full company, who probably had a lot of heavy gear with them and Swedish personnel. This was important because the Swedish transport was out of this world compared to ours. We saw the bridge for the first time, and little red lights came up in my mind. I thought, "We were never told about this," and we went on into Jadotville. I actually wrote a letter to my parents at Elisabethville Airport and told them we were going to this place and said I felt uneasy about it. Luckily I never posted it.



Corporal Butch McManus (right) holding an 84mm Carl Gustav recoilless rifle. This anti-tank gun could inflict great damage on advancing infantry



Commandant Pat Quinlan (left) and Company Sergeant John 'Jack' Prendergast at Jadotville. Both men showed outstanding leadership during the siege. Prendergast received a specially commissioned medal from the officers and men years later

What preparations were you involved in at Jadotville before the siege began?

We were told to dig trenches – ‘foxholes’ I called them. Digging a trench was hard work. We dug various foxholes. Me and the lads I was with were near Jadotville, off the road. Digging in turned out to be a marvellous decision.

How did the siege begin for you?

We were at Mass and we left our rifles outside. Sergeant John Monaghan was outside shaving, and the next thing we heard was the gendarmerie coming up, and they fired at us. They must have been watching us, but John Monaghan jumped into a foxhole and gave it them back while they shot at us.

We were with our officers and sergeants, but we were only young. I was only 19, but the older sergeants were brilliant. They looked after us, and we looked up to them. They placated and calmed us down, and we jumped into our foxholes. It was the first time that anyone had fired a shot in anger. We heard the bullets whizzing across, but I felt confident because we knew we were in good hands.

What events from the siege do you remember most vividly?

There were lots of things: a lack of food – although the cook [Corporal] Bobby Allen did his best; a lack of water and most important of all sleep. We couldn't sleep for four or five days, and Commandant Quinlan said, “We're going to be in trouble. Don't shoot until you see the whites of their eyes.”

“THEY PLACATED AND CALMED US DOWN, AND WE JUMPED INTO OUR FOXHOLES. IT WAS THE FIRST TIME THAT ANYONE HAD FIRED A SHOT IN ANGER. WE HEARD THE BULLETS WHIZZING ACROSS, BUT I FELT CONFIDENT BECAUSE WE KNEW WE WERE IN GOOD HANDS”

During the fighting Quinlan came up to my foxhole and said to me, “You, out!” It wasn't quite like that, but I jumped out and had to escort him around under fire so he could make sure that everyone was OK. He wanted to see what was happening. After we'd come back we went to where he had his headquarters at the Purfina garage. On the side of it were wooden steps going up to his office. When we got halfway up the steps Quinlan stopped and said, “I didn't realise there was another crater down at the bottom steps.” These craters were full of water, and he told me, “Two mortar bombs came over there. One caused that crater and the other is up here. The other one went in but luckily it didn't go off.” That bomb had been a dud, and he said, “Dykes, if that thing had gone off I wouldn't be here anymore.” So he was lucky.

Also, this jet fighter would come over and knocked it out of us for a while. If he had hit the garage or the right side going into Jadotville my friends and I would have gone. We were very lucky. We were rattling off at him, shooting our rifles and doing anything. At some point I believe he was hit by rifle fire – somebody was a good shot! Rumour had it that we put the jet off for two days but the buggar came back. When he returned he flew higher and out of the range of our little rifles.

What were conditions like for those fighting in the defence perimeter?

It was pretty grim all round because we didn't know what was happening. There were lulls in the fighting, but it was intense. Sometimes the

gendarmerie would take it into their heads to have a go at us, but we gave back as good as we got.

There was a company of Irish troops trying to relieve us on the Elisabethville side of the Lufira Bridge, and we could hear them pounding. We were shouting “Yeah! They'll soon be here, we'll be alright.” But they were beaten back twice, and that caused a lot of havoc with Quinlan. He said that it “wasn't on” or words to that effect. We were dependant on the people on the bridge, but there was heavy pounding and mortar fire there. There was a couple of Gurkhas killed on that bridge trying to get through to us. The disappointment then of not being relieved was rock bottom.

Was there any point during the siege when you thought you might not survive?

There were no atheists in [those] foxholes. We were all Catholics, and when we were fired on in our trenches after four or five days we were thinking, “I wish this was over.” Funnily enough I always thought we'd make it. We always knew that peace would come, but the only time that I personally thought that we wouldn't make it [back home] was when we were captured and taken out of Jadotville.

How did the siege end for you?

I must say that we didn't surrender: it was a ceasefire. We were supposed to come out of our trenches and patrol Jadotville with gendarme guards, but unfortunately that didn't quite happen.

We came out of our trenches and were mentally relieved to have it done and dusted – or so we thought. As soon as we got out that was it, we had to lay down our rifles. They then came along and were looking for our dead. [Private] Butch Brennan was a great guy, and when we were all marching up the Elisabethville end of Jadotville he started whistling *Colonel Bogey* so that put a grin on our faces! I've also

DEFENDING JADOTVILLE

13-17 SEPTEMBER 1961

A COMPANY, 35TH BATTALION'S DEFENCES CONSISTED OF SIMPLE STRUCTURES SUCH AS HOUSES, FOXHOLES, BUSHES AND A PETROL STATION



Tony Dykes (far right) queuing to receive his army wages in the Congo, 1961



This two-man slit trench at Jadotville was similar to Tony Dykes's defensive position near the officers' headquarters

“COMMANDANT QUINLAN SAID, ‘WE’RE GOING TO BE IN TROUBLE. DON’T SHOOT UNTIL YOU SEE THE WHITES OF THEIR EYES’”

got to take my hat off to Quinlan and the other officers – they were brilliant.

We got put into coaches and buses, and we had to go through this huge gendarme military base – that’s where I thought we had our chips. The women and men came out gesturing with knives what they were going to do with us. That was scary because we missed our friend the rifle, and there was nothing we could do.

What is your opinion of the UN high command and Irish Army's actions regarding Jadotville?

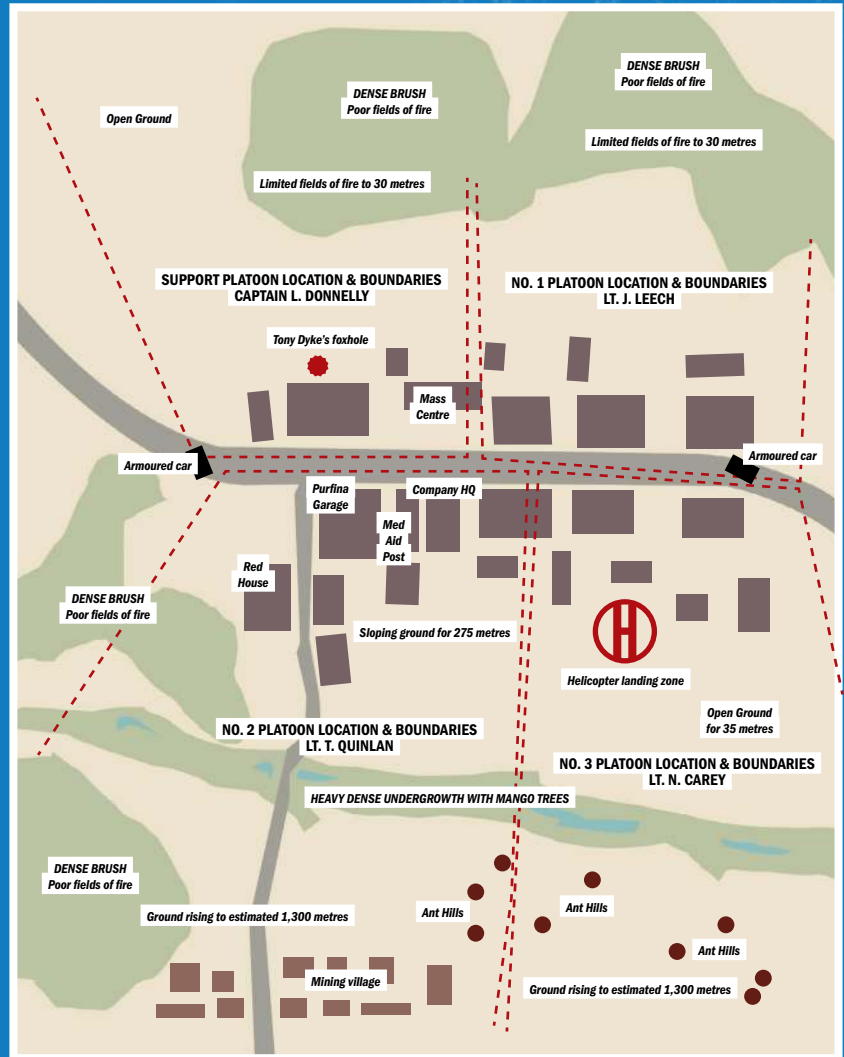
I don’t understand the mentality of the people that were in charge of us – Conor Cruise O’Brien (UN Representative in the Congo) and the Irish general in command. We were armed, but we weren’t qualified to go to Jadotville. When I say ‘qualified’ we weren’t in a state of military readiness or anything like that. To this day I don’t know who made that decision or why, and nobody’s told us.

O’Brien was a civilian politician. He didn’t have the ability to make a military decision, and we were sent out there to dry. I hold O’Brien largely responsible and whoever was the Irish general in charge. They must have left their brains back in the cadet school at Curragh. It definitely wasn’t a military decision.

Imprisonment

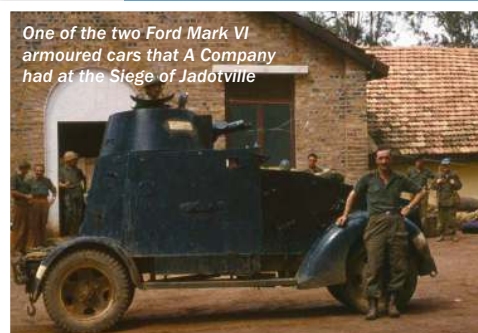
What were conditions like in captivity?

The conditions were alright, but with Moïse Tshombe (president of secessionist Katanga) it was best to keep your head down, it didn’t matter where you slept or anything like that. I



A Company's deployment at the Siege of Jadotville was a small area that consisted of requisitioned UN buildings and hastily constructed foxholes that centred around a Purkina petrol garage on the outskirts of the mining town. Tony Dykes explained, "It was a very small area. We weren't in the town itself, which was a couple of miles away, and the buildings

were bungalows there. We had one armoured car facing Elisabethville, one facing the other way, and we were in between. I was opposite the Purkina petrol garage where the officers had their headquarters. It was pretty open ground, and the Purkina garage was pockmarked with bullets. We were lucky because we had this jet flying over, and the road had craters in it."



One of the two Ford Mark VI armoured cars that A Company had at the Siege of Jadotville



A damaged villa within A Company's defence perimeter. It is pockmarked with bullet and shell marks. The bushes in front of the villas provided essential cover for the Irish soldiers

remember Tshombe came out and Pat Quinlan was talking to him, and I was very close by. Tshombe reassured us, near enough, that we were going to be safe. If it was true or not I don't know. He spared our lives, but when we all walked up to have a look he had armed people all around us. It wasn't very nice.

We were held in captivity for what felt like a very long time, but we were kept busy. We had guards, and in Kolwezi we stopped in a huge building of flats, and Quinlan had us all start training on physical self-defence. He was good: all we could see was these guys with rifles on the other side looking at us, and we all thought, "These guys might get cross."

What was your opinion of Pat Quinlan?

He was hard but a good man: we admired him, and I hope he admired us as well. He had an eye like a hawk. I remember we were marching around Custume Barracks as a company, and all of a sudden I heard this voice saying, "Dykes! Swing your arms!" That was in front of 150 of us, and he was able to spot that little item. He was a good disciplinarian, but he looked after us.

Quinlan saved our lives by digging the foxholes. He was the same in captivity and never stopped being the boss. He never said, "Sorry lads" or anything like that, he continued being a military man no matter what happened to him. He put across to me very strongly that we were just carrying on doing our duty. I must say all the officers were good but tough – they had to be.

The outstanding man to me was [Company Sergeant] Jack Prendergast. He placated us and was out there handing out ammunition under fire – he was a very brave man. Many years later back in Ireland they made a collection and got a special medal struck for him and presented it to him in Custume Barracks. He deserved it.

What happened when you were eventually released from captivity?

We were told that we were going to be released, and we were all pulled into trucks and coaches to the outskirts of Elisabethville. But talks went awry, and we were taken back to Kolwezi. That was disappointing. Then the second time we were going to be released Quinlan made sure that behind each driver there were two senior men. If we weren't going to be released they were going to throw the main driver and his assistant out. We wouldn't have stood a chance to be honest, but Quinlan had those people on each coach: we weren't going to go back to Kolwezi. That was a bit scary, but we didn't know, and the senior people were brilliant. They never worried us about what was possibly going to happen. Luckily we were released. If you look at it sensibly, what chance would we have had to get off the coaches? We had no arms, but the gendarmes did, and we were very deep in enemy territory.

However, it was good to be released. We were taken back to the airport area around Elisabethville. That was a relief, and word spread that the whole company would be repatriated – unfortunately this was only half the company. They left three or four weeks before us, and we were supposed to be going on the next flight, but then all hell broke loose again in Elisabethville.

Victory in Elisabethville

What happened when fighting broke out around Elisabethville Airport in December 1961?

It was more foxholes, and this time it was wet weather; we were swimming in it. All hell broke loose day and night. That's where I first got close to being shot. There were two of us in this foxhole, and all I could hear was this 'Splatter,

splatter' fire. I knew what it was, but luckily it was well away from me on my left side. Snipers were coming in, and you could hear the bullets rattling in from the Katangese gendarmeries and mercenaries.

36th Irish Battalion were flying in to Elisabethville at the time I was there. We were under fire, and they passed our lines. They were told on the American plane beforehand to get into battledress. It must have been terrible for them because they knew they were landing in the airport under fire, and I believe the plane got a couple of shots.

They got off the plane and ran across our lines; I shall never forget that. They were coming off in their pristine uniforms and there was us in the trenches in slopping water, but I did pity them. They were heading straight into fire through a tunnel, and some were shot and didn't come back. Can you imagine coming off a plane and coming straight into that? They crossed our lines, and we tried to warn them by shouting, but they were given orders to rush through the bush, down the tunnel and onto a railway where they were going.

What was it like fighting alongside UN Indian Army Gurkhas?

We had to do patrols around the airport, and I was lucky enough to be on patrol with some Swedes and Gurkhas. It was a pleasure to say that I fought with those people.

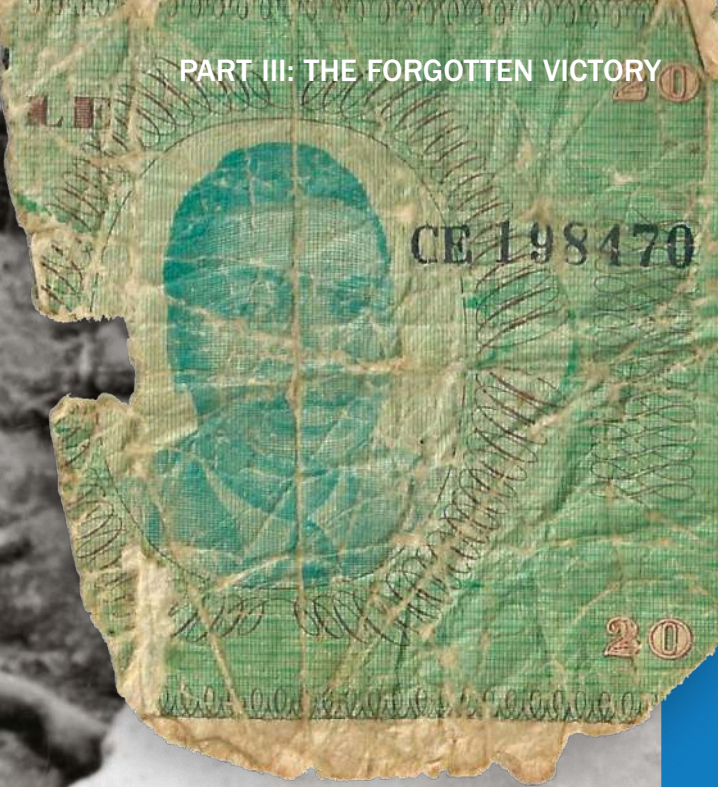
We were on a particular patrol one evening, and we could see an enemy machine gun position at the bottom of the airport. The tracers started coming across: you could fry eggs on them they were so constant. Luckily they went high, but one of the officers said, "Get down low." The Gurkhas were to my left – they were only small but well-armed.

Irish UN troops board a lorry in Leopoldville Airport before being airlifted to a trouble spot in Katanga, 11 December 1961



This Fouga jet bombed and strafed A Company at Jadotville. Tony Dykes and his comrades fired at it with their rifles and ultimately forced the aircraft to fly higher

Indian UN troops take cover in a hastily dug trench during a Katangese attack in Elisabethville, December 1961



Above: Tony Dykes kept this rare Katangan franc featuring the face of Moïse Tshombe from his service in the Congo. Because Katanga was a secessionist state the note was not technically legal tender

“QUINLAN SAVED OUR LIVES BY DIGGING THE FOXHOLES. HE WAS THE SAME IN CAPTIVITY AND NEVER STOPPED BEING THE BOSS”

Irish UN troops recapture a tunnel from Katangan troops in Elisabethville, 22 December 1961



Katangan troops take cover behind an armoured vehicle during fighting in Elisabethville, 16 December 1961

Below: A Company, 35th Battalion on parade. Tony Dykes is in the back row, second from left. This image was incorporated into the company's Presidential Unit Citation in September 2016



It was getting dark but the officers decided, "We can't be lying down here all night," and they sent the Gurkhas in. That was that, it was all over. It was a sigh of relief: there were only a dozen or so Gurkhas but they came back with smiles on their faces. I remember one of them had three or four watches on his arm and was smiling. I was embarrassed because I was six-foot tall, but these guys were smaller and genuine [soldiers]. It was an honour to see that and to serve with them.

What happened when you were guarding captured mercenaries?

There was another kerfuffle in Elisabethville, and we had to take over the telephone exchange, post office and other important places. When myself and a chap called [Private] Bobby Bradley got to the transports to take us into Elisabethville an NCO shouted, "We haven't got our box of ammunition with us. Dykes! Bradley! Go back and get it." We ran back and got the ammunition, but when we returned the rest of our company had gone into Elisabethville – they couldn't wait. There were a couple of officers left in charge so we went up to them, explained the situation and asked what they wanted us to do.

The officer said, "We've got mercenaries down there. You two go down and keep an eye on them." We had to guard captured mercenaries. That was scary because these guys were tall and built like brick shithouses! I was tall, but I was like a wisp. There were at least half a dozen of them so they outnumbered us, and they had probably fought against us at Jadotville or in Elisabethville. I had my rifle but I said, "These guys will knock the hell out of us." Luckily, they

were more relieved than anything else because they were put on a plane afterwards and sent straight to Rhodesia [now Zimbabwe].

How did it feel to comprehensively defeat the gendarmeries and mercenaries before you returned to Ireland?

It was memorable, and we had got our own back – we could see the light at the end of the tunnel. During that time in Elisabethville the UN was permitted to have its own jet fighters, and it gave me great pleasure. Two or three days before Christmas in 1961, Elisabethville Airport was in a mess with skeleton planes, the lot. But the pleasure I got to see was before any plane took off the Indian jets would strafe the bottom of the runway in case anyone was there. If anybody tried to shoot at us these guys would come in and knock them out.

When we finally left for Ireland there were no seats on the plane: we were in our uniforms with mucky boots, and my dog tags were gone. All I remember was a lovely view of Elisabethville and jungle underneath. I said, "Bye bye, you're on your own!"

Unjustly branded

Did your experiences in the Congo inform your permanent move to England in 1962?

It did. I left the Irish Army in April or May 1962 because I was in turmoil – I couldn't face signing on for another three or four years. We were called cowards: some military rumour went around saying that we left waving our white shirts back in Jadotville.

I got a good reference from the army, but I left and moved over to England. I blotted it

all out and wanted to make a new, decent life for myself after all that. I met my wife not long after, but I never told her what had happened. My brother-in-law was in the Royal Navy, and he would often tell us about his escapades, but I would just sit and never said a word about mine. I've been angry for years, and I was probably initially ashamed to tell my family about it.

How does it feel to be belatedly honoured decades after the siege took place?

Bittersweet is the word, because three quarters of the lads are not here. We should have been recognised at least a year or two after we came back, but the government of the day just brushed it under as though it didn't happen.

Pat Quinlan did volunteer some officers and NCOs to get medals, but they were refused. I would love to know who was on the committee. They couldn't have been military men, and if they were they didn't know what it was like to fire a rifle in anger. It's a sad situation where the officers and men had to make a collection for a medal for Jack Prendergast.

What still needs to be done for veterans in the present day?

That's a great question. West Meath County Council put on a do for us and gave us a certificate, and down in Kerry, where Pat Quinlan came from, they did something similar. In my opinion every Irish county council should do the same. The lads in A Company came from all over the country so every council in the republic should recognise us, so that all Ireland knows about it.

IRISH UNITED NATIONS VETERANS ASSOCIATION



The IUNVA is the association for serving and ex-service members of the Irish Defence Forces and Gardaí (Republic of Ireland Police Force). It is open to anyone from these organisations that have served at least 90 days service on a UN mission in a foreign country. The IUNVA's primary role is to provide support and events for members and their families who have been affected by overseas service.

For more information visit: www.iunva.ie



Veterans of Jadotville, including Tony Dykes (second row, first from left) and John Gorman (first row, second from left) gather at an event at Custume Barracks, Athlone, 2011

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ALGERIA

Great Battles

For over a year France's elite shock troops and revolutionary terrorists were locked in a bitter battle in the slums of the Algerian capital

WORDS MIGUEL MIRANDA



French troops overlook the Casbah, a squalid slum in the centre of Algiers

FRS

ALGIERS JUNE 1956 - SEPTEMBER 1957

As the Cold War's chill hung over Europe, former colonies across Asia and Africa stirred from decades – and sometimes centuries – of foreign misrule.

On too many occasions nationalist fervour led to unbelievable violence. The British Empire's relatively peaceful release of India, for example, didn't spare millions of innocents from the human toll wrought by Partition. Southeast Asia fared no better, as fresh conflicts erupted in Burma, Indonesia, Malaya and Vietnam.

Yet in North Africa a war unlike any other was prosecuted with extreme cruelty. France had dominated Algeria for 133 years, subjugating it in a spasm of imperialism from 1830 to 1845. Instead of turning it into a protectorate like neighbouring Tunisia or Morocco, Algeria was made a French province.

Enabling meant grafting a façade of French tastes and habits onto North Africa. This was most noticeable in Algiers, with its tree-lined boulevards, sidewalk cafes and imposing apartment blocks. Unscathed by World War II and populated by Europeans, the capital's interior also offered refuge for the Arab migrants from the countryside displaced by pied-noir, or 'black foot', settlers who built their farms and vineyards over the land. This made conditions in the metropolitan slum of the Casbah intolerable. With its ramshackle brick houses piled on each other and crowded along winding alleys and back streets, the Casbah symbolised the iniquities of Algiers.

So when the revolutionaries of the Front de Libération National, or FLN, and its armed wing the ALN rose up in October 1954 it marked a reckoning between a native populace

OPPOSING FORCES



FRANCE

LEADERS:

Gen. Raoul Salan,
Gen. Jacques Massu,
Gen. Paul Aussaresses,
Col. Marcel Bigeard,
Col. Yves Godard,
Col. Roger Trinquier

FORCES:

10th Parachute Division
SDECE Action Service
Gendarmerie

Ultras

TACTICS:
Mass arrests and
detention of suspects.
Imprisonment and
torture of FLN agents.
Executions.

ALGERIA

LEADERS:

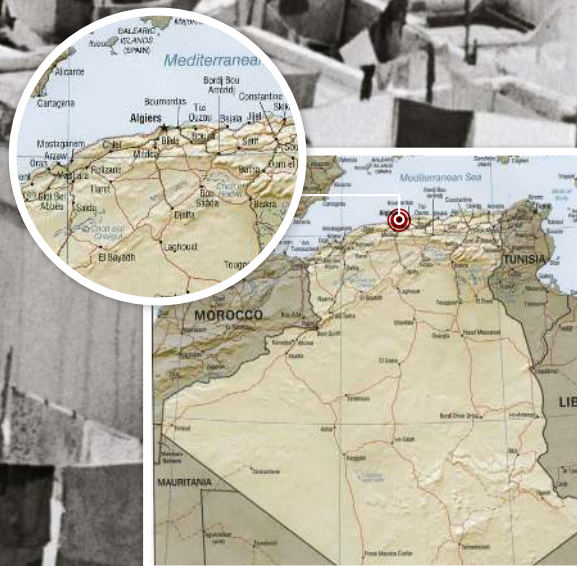
Saadi Yacef,
Larbi ben M'hidi,
Abame Ramdane,
Benyoucef Benkhedda

FORCES:

1,400 - 1,500
operatives and fighters
under the Comite
de coordination
d'execution. An
estimated 5,000 spies
and sympathisers
spread across Algiers.

TACTICS:

Bombing and
assassination. Avoiding
pitched battles.



long oppressed by the colonial yoke and an entrenched local elite, known as 'colons', ready to defend its privileges. Between them was an institution, the French armed forces, which wanted to prove itself after the recent debacles in World War II and Indochina.

It was in the Casbah of Algiers where France's elite troops pitted themselves against determined urban 'fellaghas' – the derogatory term for guerrillas. It should be emphasised the FLN were nationalists, rather than Islamists. The 1950s marked a rare epoch in modern Arab history where the mesmerising ideal of Pan-Arabism captured hearts and minds from Baghdad to Rabat. The FLN aspired to a modern and independent Algerian state. But the organisation's willingness to use violence meant a complete separation from the original Etoile Nord Africaine movement that had lobbied for Algerian independence since the 1920s.

The French never tolerated the idea of giving up Algeria Française. Anti-colonial demonstrations in the town of Setif in 1945 were put down with force, leaving 10,000 dead. Survivors of the massacre founded the FLN to wage war in freedom's name, even if it meant brutalising anyone who opposed them, whether they were Europeans, Arabs or Berbers.

The campaign that became the Battle of Algiers marked a tactical shift for the FLN. Bloodied by an overwhelming French response in 'the bled' – the deserts and countryside – the FLN created a new sub-organisation to terrorise the cities and tie down their nemesis. The responsibility fell on two leaders, Saadi Yacef and Larbi ben M'hidi, who were tasked with orchestrating a series of attacks that would unravel public order.

Another motivation for terrorising Algiers was avenging the gruesome work done by the Ultras, a colloquial term for local French nationalists who organised themselves to fight the FLN. While regular French forces and their 'harkis', or Arab auxiliaries, were more than a match for the FLN on the field, the Ultras used indiscriminate terror tactics to match the atrocities the FLN committed against the pied-noirs community. This reached a tipping point in early 1956 when a bomb allegedly planted by the Ultras killed 75 people in the Casbah. The carnage gave the FLN a battle cry to rally the masses – retribution.

Life and death

The reprisal campaign began in June 1956 when lone assassins targeted members of the gendarmerie. This usually involved a pedestrian with a concealed weapon (either a handgun or a knife) approaching their target to kill him at close range before fleeing. The tempo of the war increased on 30 September 1956 after terror attacks on two locations: an establishment called Milk Bar and the restaurant La Cafeteria, carried out by an all-female cell dressed as Europeans. The explosions left two dead and 30 injured. Another homemade time bomb was left in the offices of Air France, but it failed to detonate.

This was a novel strategy conceived by Yacef. Since authorities could question any Casbah residents they deemed suspicious, it made sense for women who knew how to pass for colons and speak French to work

“SURVIVORS OF THE MASSACRE FOUNDED THE FLN TO WAGE WAR IN FREEDOM'S NAME, EVEN IF IT MEANT BRUTALISING ANYONE WHO OPPOSED THEM, WHETHER THEY WERE EUROPEANS, ARABS OR BERBERS”

as his couriers and bombers. These terrorist 'heroines', like Zohra Drif Bitat and Djamilia Bouhired, helped plan and execute operations throughout Algiers, which totalled 600 incidents of arson, bombings and murder by late 1956.

For the colons the situation was unbearable. For the people of the Casbah it was just desserts. Fearing chaos and panic, Governor Robert Lacoste gave the military carte blanche to root out the city's terrorists. This marked the French army's transition from conventional fighting to a peculiar form of suppression that tarnished its image for decades to come.

The responsibility to preserve and protect Algiers fell on General Jacques Massu, who commanded the elite regiments of the Tenth Parachute Division, together with local gendarmes, army regulars and the Ultras. At least 12,000 men in total, led by France's toughest officers, had a single mission: to find where the enemy was hiding and destroy them.

Until 1956 the French relied on an overwhelming presence in the wilayats, or provinces, of the Algerian coast. Each wilayat was divided into quadrillages where infantry columns, often assisted by helicopters and light armour, searched for FLN encampments. Elaborate fortifications such as electrified fences along the borders with Morocco and Tunisia, known as the Pedron and Morice Lines, were in place for blocking the transit of FLN guerrillas to and from their bases. In Algiers, three undermanned airborne regiments of the Tenth Parachute Division, together with a Special Action unit, were cobbled together for dismantling the FLN network in the Casbah.

Unknown to the French, Yacef and ben M'hidi belonged to a shadowy network called the Comité de coordination d'exécution, or the CCE, that was responsible for all the recent mayhem. The CCE's other leaders were FLN stalwarts Abane Ramdane and Benyoucef Benkhedda. This quartet controlled invisible sectors of Algiers, with agents and cells bound together by safe houses, informants and cryptic notes in letter boxes. But it was Yacef, who held the nominal rank of 'colonel', who directed the myriad activities from within the Casbah.

The inner workings of the CCE's terror campaign remain a mystery to this day. But one French counter-intelligence officer in Algiers, Colonel Roger Trinquier, later wrote about his experiences in his book *Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency*. In it, between long chapters on the science of defeating terrorism, he described how the CCE functioned. According to Trinquier, the FLN would hand-pick local assassins and entice them with FLN



The elite 10th Parachute Division were a crack unit that fought hard in Indochina. Their ultimate mission was ridding Algiers of the FLN



Right: Bombing and terror were common tactics of the FLN in Algiers during the war

GREAT BATTLES

07 CASINO DE LA CORNICHE

The last great outrage of the CCE terrorists was a bomb attack on a popular night spot. On the evening of 9 June 1957, a time bomb concealed in the orchestra pit of the Casino de la Corniche exploded and killed 11 people. More than 80 were left wounded in an operation personally directed by Saadi Yacef.

04 A FEARFUL PRISON

The compound once known as Prison Barberousse became a holding pen for several hundred FLN fighters and activists. Many endured horrific torture, either through beatings or electrocution. Among its notable inmates was the poet Moufidi Zakaria, who later composed the Algerian national anthem.

08 THE MASTERMIND FALLS

Once his location was betrayed, units of the First Foreign Parachute Regiment stormed Saadi Yacef's hideout in No. 3 Rue Caton on 24 September. He was captured along with his girlfriend Zohra Drif. Born and bred in the Casbah, after the war he wrote a memoir, *Souvenirs from the Battle of Algiers*.

03 BAB EL OUED

The long Bab el Oued avenue skirting the Casbah and leading out of the city formed an informal front line separating the CCE terrorists and the French. On 28 December 1956, several bombs were detonated along its length. This marked the peak of the terror campaign directed by Saadi Yacef.

01 MARTYRS' SQUARE

The intersection known as Place des Martyrs was the gateway to the Casbah. By the 1950s the majority European population of Algiers had swelled to 200,000 – making them easy targets for the FLN. Nearly 12,000 uniformed French soldiers and police were engaged in suppressing the Casbah by 1957. It was ironic that the mayor's office, army headquarters, and the FLN's main hideout were all minutes away from each other.

02 THE CASBAH'S CATHEDRAL

Even religious edifices weren't spared from being targeted. The Cathedral of St Philippe used to be a mosque until its conversion in 1845. In 1956, just days away from New Year's eve, a bomb was detonated outside it. The Cathedral towered over the Casbah behind it, which was a teeming slum of some 80,000 Arabs crowded into a few square kilometres.

05 THE DISAPPEARANCE OF AUDIN

One incident that cast doubt on French counterinsurgency during the battle for Algiers involved a lukewarm communist. After being arrested in his apartment on 11 June, the university lecturer Maurice Audin was never heard from again. A public inquiry revealed Audin, a French citizen born in Algeria with suspected ties to the FLN, was beaten to death – he joined the 3,000 civilians killed in Algiers between 1956 and 1957.

06 THE GREAT STRIKE

The storied docks of Algiers had a pivotal role in the struggle for the capital. During the last week of January 1957 an eight-day strike by 350,000 Arab residents, with backing from the FLN, was supposed to shut down the whole city. But French soldiers forced dockworkers back to their jobs at gunpoint. This broke the momentum of the strike and weakened the Casbah terrorists' influence.

European Quarters

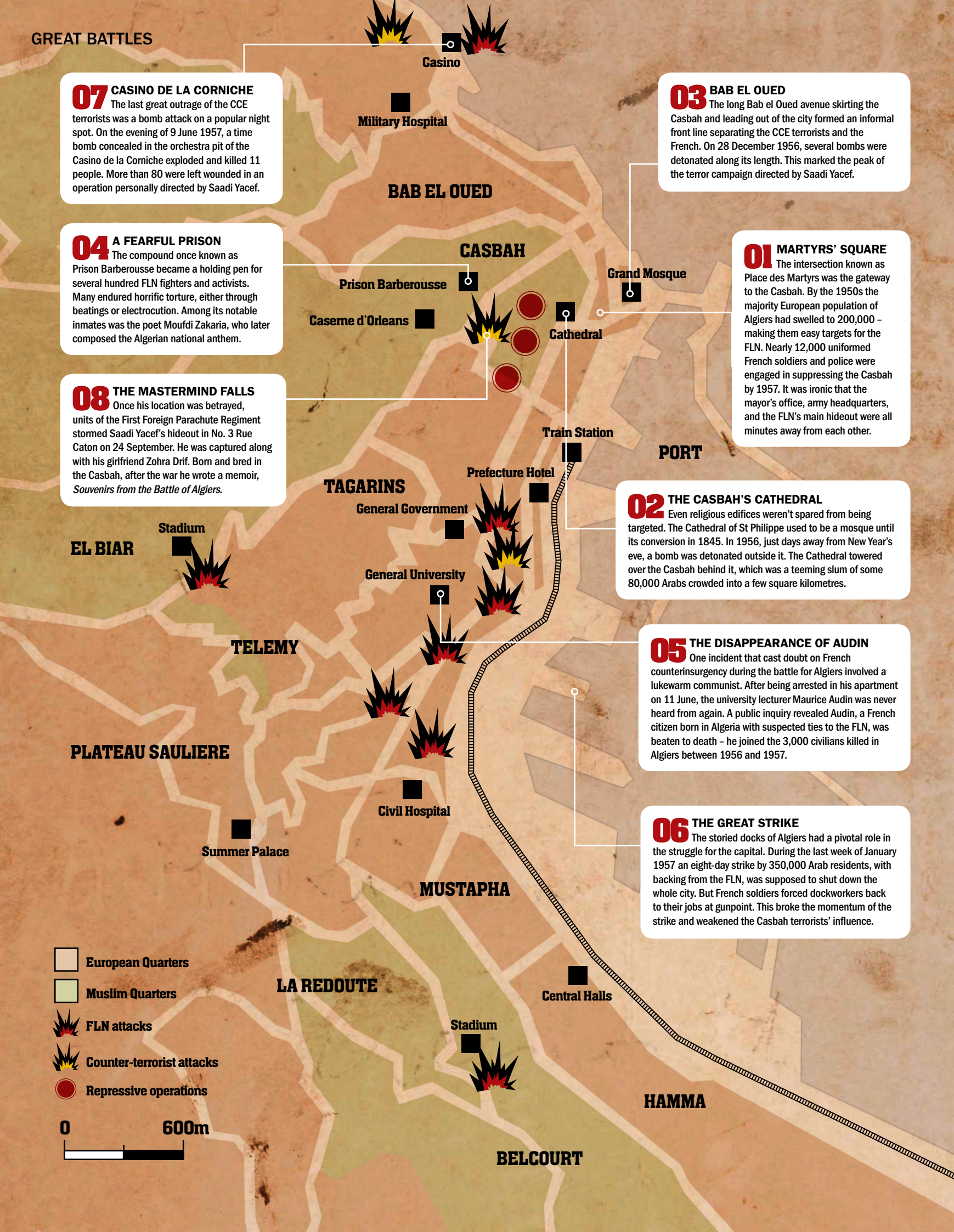
Muslim Quarters

FLN attacks

Counter-terrorist attacks

Repressive operations

0 600m



membership. "One evening, at a fixed time and an appointed place," wrote Trinquier, sharing the perspective of an anonymous operative, "an individual unknown to me was to give me a loaded weapon with the mission to kill the first person I came across. I was then to flee, dropping the weapon into a trashcan that the unknown person had pointed out to me," the operative had told Trinquier. "I did what was required of me. Three days later I joined the ALN." The ALN was the armed wing of the FLN.

Trinquier also shed light on how the terrorists established their mobile bases in a crowded slum. "When one or several members of the Council [the FLN leadership] wanted to install themselves in a house in the Casbah, they first sent a team of masons to construct a hiding place there," Trinquier wrote. "The masons immediately gathered together the people and told them, in substance, 'You are soon to receive important personages. You will be responsible for their security with your lives.'"

Trinquier claimed this process sometimes involved executing Casbah residents of dubious loyalty, but it's worth pointing out there's little proof to back the colonel's claim.

What allowed the CCE to operate on the scale it did was a remarkable top-down operation that thrived in absolute secrecy. Again, it's Colonel Trinquier's own account that explains how it worked. The essential unit was a three-person cell, and each cell formed part of a company that ran a district. This was a 'political' organisation. For combat, each district had a 35-strong group of fighters again divided among three-person cells. Orders were relayed anonymously. The leaders of each group delivered these to a deputy, who then shared the mission details to the cells. When it came to assembling the crude bombs used

for terrorising public spaces, Yacef established a system that delegated each task, from assembly to deployment, among separate cells.

Colonel Trinquier believed there were never more than 1,400 full-time operatives working under the CCE. Of course, their sympathisers and conspirators numbered greater, but the fact that they came close to seizing Algiers at a time when more than 415,000 French conscript soldiers were deployed in the country proved their effectiveness.

The innovators

Officers like Colonel Trinquier formed a collection of ruthless leaders who used their intellect and cunning to reclaim the Casbah. Foremost among them were two uncompromising officers who stopped at nothing to defeat the CCE: General Paul Aussaresses and Colonel Marcel Bigeard.

General Aussaresses was commander of the mysterious Action Group, a unit whose mission was breaking the will of suspected terrorists.

On the streets of Algiers were the paratrooper companies and their daring leader, Colonel Marcel Bigeard, who led the Third Colonial Parachutists. The unit was an acclaimed one, having fought with distinction in Indochina. Bigeard himself was a veteran of the Free French Forces in World War II and a former captive of the Vietminh after Dien Bien Phu. He was even the victim of an assassination attempt, having been shot twice in the chest by FLN gunmen in 1956. The experience left him undaunted, and he remained a centurion of Imperial France.

Determined to check the momentum of the CCE's terror campaign, in the opening months of 1957 both General Aussaresses and Colonel Bigeard would successfully dismantle the CCE's

operations and restore security throughout Algiers. How they did it was exceptionally clever.

Colonel Bigeard's paras, considered the crème de la crème of the French army, locked down the entire Casbah and sealed off its streets with barbed wire and checkpoints. Elsewhere in Algiers, the local gendarmes, together with turncoat FLN fighters, established other checkpoints to restrict the mobility of terrorists. Census data, police records and personal ID cards were invaluable for large-scale surveillance over the city.

Then came the reign of terror. On most days trucks of paratroops totting their MAT-49 submachine guns would storm a house or close down a street. The Casbah's alleys and passageways were patrolled day and night. By all accounts General Aussaresses's Action Group was already subjecting detainees to harsh interrogations – from electrocuting their genitals to sleep deprivation. French soldiers, with requisite French terror, became a permanent feature of the Casbah.

The turning point in the struggle for Algiers was a massive strike organised by the CCE to shut down the city. The French had gotten wind of the plan involving trade unions, labourers and small-time business owners, who planned to skip work and protest for a week. The revolt was supposed to begin on 28 January 1957. The clock was ticking.

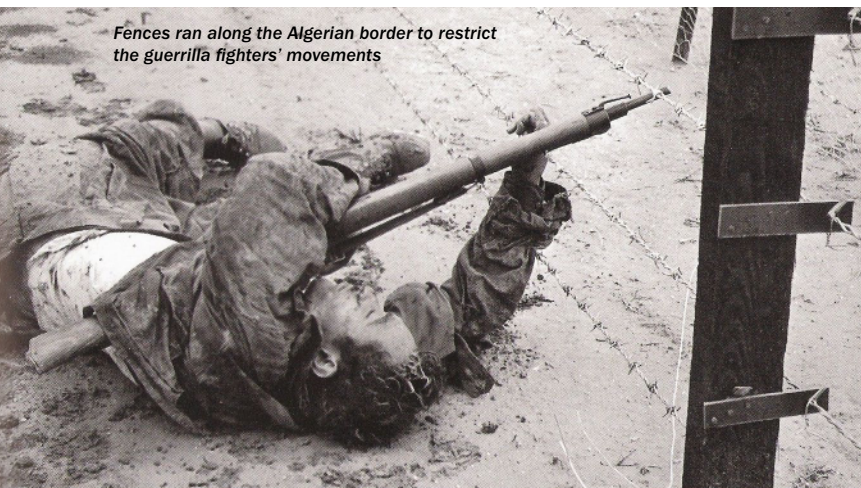
There was no time left for cat and mouse. General Massu, General Aussaresses and Colonel Bigeard immediately launched a plan to beat the strike before it started. On the day itself paras and gendarmes forced shopkeepers to resume business. The workers in the factories and docks were compelled to remain in place under guard. Those who did join the throngs in the demonstration were arrested.



The long and bitter war years eventually drove a wedge between the colons, who wanted Algeria to remain French, and a military that could no longer afford to keep fighting



The protracted Algerian War became an incubator for helicopter assault tactics, which the French used with great success against the FLN



Fences ran along the Algerian border to restrict the guerrilla fighters' movements



Colons were recruited to fight in groups such as the Commandos de Chasse



The crackdown was so swift it caught the CCE off guard. All of a sudden its entire campaign was under threat. General Aussaresses had much to show for his efforts: arresting demonstrators allowed him to piece together the FLN's order of battle in the Casbah. Within days 23 gunmen and 51 cell leaders were arrested. A further 174 'tax collectors' were rounded up. Some 200 felleghas were killed in ensuing street battles. Almost overnight, it seemed, the entire structure of the FLN's CCE collapsed. Indeed it had, and by March the routine violence of the previous months had mostly subsided.

Soon the terrorist leadership was itself splintered. Colonel Trinquier, the counter-intelligence strategist, used his network of informants to spring a trap on Larbi ben M'hidi, who was brought to General Aussaresses for questioning. A terrible fate awaited the local patriot. After a routine beating, he was taken to the southern outskirts of Algiers and hanged in a farmhouse. The local press were then told he killed himself while in custody.

With their organisation in tatters, the CCE tried its best to prolong the fight by carrying out even more outrageous missions in the months of June and July. This culminated in the destruction of the Casino de Corniche, a popular watering hole for colons, that left 11 dead and 89 hurt. It was an operation planned by Yacef himself – a powerful reprisal for the CCE's losses.

The CCE, in disarray from infiltrators and the collapse of its cells, was finally destroyed the following month. Yacef was arrested in the Casbah in a nondescript abode not far from the French commandant's headquarters on 24 September. His trusted lieutenant Ali la Pointe was killed in October.

Yacef was put on trial and sentenced to death before Charles de Gaulle, who assumed power in 1958, ordered his imprisonment in France. After being set free a handful of years later, he published his memoirs on the 'Battle of Algiers' – a title he found ironic – and found a filmmaker, Gillo Pontecorvo, to adopt it for the big screen. The resulting movie was acclaimed upon its release but banned in France for many years because of its portrayal of French atrocities.

Yet it was Yacef and Pontecorvo's enduring war film, with its stark imagery and non-professional cast, that etched wartime Algiers into the public imagination. The FLN may have lost on the tactical level, but it was their spirit that wrote the history of the struggle after. In the final tally, it turned out more than 3,000 civilians – whether or not they collaborated with the FLN – went missing between 1956 and 1957, apparent casualties of French heavy-handedness during the conflict.

Besides this, the fearless commanders in the battle had made their reputations. Aussaresses in particular went on to enjoy a long career after the war. Almost untouched by the treason committed by his peers in their attempts to

kill de Gaulle in the early 1960s, Aussaresses transitioned from a practitioner to a mentor, lecturing American Green Berets on the fine art of counterinsurgency.

Whether French methods in Algiers were justified to prevent terrorism is almost moot given how much more violence, committed by guerrillas and pied-noirs, occurred during the rest of the Algerian War that spanned nine years. Pontecorvo's adaptation of Yacef's work showed both sides undertaking monstrous deeds and justifying these. Indeed, before his capture in 1957, Saadi Yacef told the French ethnologist Germain Tillion, "Innocent blood cries out for vengeance!"

The bitter end

The Battle of Algiers was a testament to French resolve in a time of crisis. Yet as soon as it was over, the success of crushing the FLN in the cities dissipated.

It wasn't until the turn of the century, however, when Aussaresses had aged to a soft-spoken old man who covered his bad eye with a patch, that the painful memories from the war were rekindled. In a tell-all book published more than 40 years after the events he took part in, Aussaresses chronicled the torture he inflicted on prisoners for the sake of vital intelligence.

Despite confessing what amounted to crimes against humanity, justice wasn't forthcoming for a war hero and a pensioner. The worst of it was a minor court case that fined him a petty sum. Aussaresses died in 2013 at the ripe age of 95. "I consider I did my difficult duty of a soldier implicated in a difficult mission," was his final say on his reputation. He was unrepentant until the end.

The darkest aspects of the Algerian War didn't hit home for the French public until

"IN 1992 ALGERIA WAS ENGULFED BY ANOTHER CIVIL WAR AFTER THE MILITARY NULLIFIED ELECTIONS WON BY HARDLINE ISLAMISTS. THE RESULTING BLOODSHED LEFT AN ESTIMATED 200,000 KILLED"



Left: French paratroopers of the 10th Division march through Algiers in 1957

Colonel Marcel Bigeard and his paratroopers, largely equipped with surplus arms, played a crucial role hunting down FLN cadres in the slums of Algiers



While French commanders gloated over the success of their border defences and the wholesale destruction wrought on entire FLN units, the war's cost and political ramifications jeopardised France's standing in the world.

It didn't help that a political rift between Paris and Algiers almost caused a civil war. In 1958 thousands of angry colons stormed the government house in Algiers, accompanied by sympathetic officers, with the revered General Raoul Salan at their head. The assembly demanded an end to France's government, the Fourth Republic, and the return of Charles de Gaulle to power.

Both conditions were fulfilled in a matter of days, yet within four years the very same agitators who believed in de Gaulle's leadership plotted his death. The same tactics used by the Casbah terrorists were appropriated by the shadowy Organisation l'armée secrete, or OAS, an unholy alliance of Ultras and French officers, for a bombing and arson campaign across mainland France and Algeria in 1961.

When independence for Algeria was settled, marking France's final and complete departure from North Africa and the Arab world, thousands of colons fled its cities and towns, taking whatever money and possessions they could. As a final blow to the Algerian nationalists, the Ultras and the OAS sabotaged farms and factories before they were abandoned, leaving grim surprises for the new state.

Military losses for the French between 1954 and 1962 reached 17,456 killed and some 65,000 wounded. The Muslim harkis suffered 30,000 dead, adding to anywhere between 150,000 and 1 million Algerian fatalities.

What befell the loyal harkis at war's end was equally tragic. Once disarmed by the French,

they were left at the mercy of the FLN. This triggered another exodus as Arab and Berber veterans, fearing gruesome deaths at the hands of their former enemies, desperately tried to reach France.

Algeria gained its independence on 5 July 1962 but slid into military dictatorship in 1965. In 1992 Algeria was engulfed by another civil war after the military nullified elections won by hardline Islamists. The resulting bloodshed left an estimated 200,000 killed.

As in America's own crucible in Vietnam, the task of using a conventional army to defeat a local population was a fool's errand. Whatever counterinsurgency is supposed to mean, it almost always doesn't work as intended. This is the timeless lesson of Algiers, where a group of pitiless soldiers turned a slum into a charnel house and thought they had found a new science for organised violence. Their success was a mirage. Ultimately they still lost the war.

one FLN veteran, Louissette Ighilahriz, was interviewed by *Le Monde* in 2000. According to Ighilahriz, after being captured by the French in 1958 she was brought to a camp and raped multiple times, often left naked and bleeding in solitary confinement. If it weren't for the kindness of a mysterious French doctor, she said, her captivity would've been worse.

The French press knew about the military's widespread torture and detention of enemy combatants in the Algerian War. But when they tried holding the army accountable, the official line was pointing at the FLN – the rebels mutilated their victims and massacred citizens, wasn't it only fair to be as harsh?

Loyal soldiers like Aussaresses embraced this view and remained firm in the personal belief that such methods, permitted by the government, helped to save innocent lives. But for commanders like General Massu, reconciling their actions with their honour proved impossible.

Although the FLN lost Algiers, the French did not gain an upper hand where it counted most, and the battle failed to bring a lasting victory.

FURTHER READING

- ★ **A SAVAGE WAR OF PEACE: ALGERIA 1954 - 1962** BY ALISTAIRE HORN
- ★ **MECCA OF REVOLUTION: ALGERIA, DECOLONIZATION, AND THE THIRD WORLD ORDER** BY JEFFREY JAMES BYRNE
- ★ **MODERN WARFARE: A FRENCH VIEW OF COUNTERINSURGENCY** BY ROGER TRINQUIER
- ★ **MY BATTLE OF ALGIERS** BY TED MORGAN
- ★ **THE BATTLE OF ALGIERS** BY SAADI YACEF
- ★ **THE BATTLE OF THE CASBAH** BY PAUL AUSSARESSES
- ★ **THE WAR WITHOUT A NAME: FRANCE IN ALGERIA** BY JOHN E. TALBOTT
- ★ **THE WRETCHED OF THE EARTH** BY FRANTZ FANNON



JAPAN'S DOOMED FLAGSHIP

In 1945 this super battleship embarked on a desperate mission to halt the American landings on Okinawa

7 APRIL 1945



WORDS MARC DESANTIS

A grey leviathan looms in the midday light. The battleship's great guns are silent but exude a palpable aura of menace. It drives southwards over the waves of the East China Sea at 20 knots towards its final destination, Okinawa, where an armada of American ships lies offshore overseeing the invasion of the island. Yamato, the pride of the Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN), is a 70,000-ton super battleship, the first of her class and flagship of the Combined Fleet. It is far superior to any other warship afloat.

Yamato is under orders to ravage the American ships off Okinawa with her gigantic 47-centimetre (18.1-inch) guns, beach herself and fight to the death in the same spirit as the kamikaze pilots who at that moment exact a frightful toll on the US Navy's warships. Okinawa is an island in the Ryukyu chain, and the last

stepping stone for the US forces before the Japanese Archipelago lying 560 kilometres (350 miles) away. It is here that the battleship is expected to live up to her name, Yamato – a word that embodies the essence of the Japanese nation and people.

However, the flagship will never reach its destination. It is just past noon, 7 April 1945, and Yamato is still 400 kilometres (250 miles) to the north west of Okinawa. US Navy warplanes have found her. They are circling, visible through gaps in the clouds – midnight-blue angels of death casting judgement over the battleship and her nine escorts. On Yamato's bridge stands a young assistant radar officer, Ensign Mitsuru Yoshida. He is 22 years old and had been a law student at Tokyo Imperial University just two years before, when he was called to serve his emperor. Unlike almost all of his fellows aboard Yamato, he will

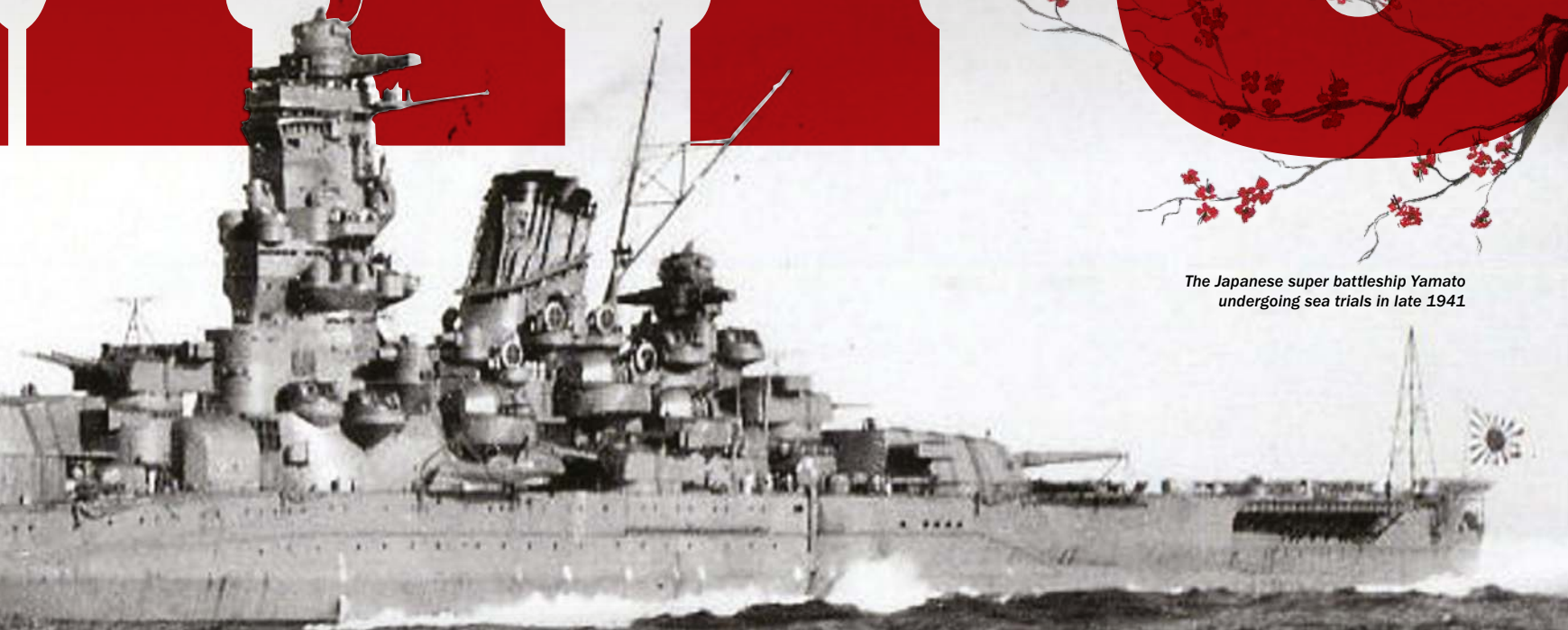
survive the calamity that is about to befall the vessel. After the war, he will write a eulogy for the doomed ship and her crew.

Operation Heaven Number One, or Ten-ichigo in Japanese, has little chance of success. The mission has been conceived as a means of restoring a measure of honour to the Combined Fleet, which has been shamed by its inaction around Okinawa compared to the kamikaze attacks of Japan's death-seeking pilots. "But where is the navy?" Emperor Hirohito asked Admiral Koshiro Oikawa, his most senior naval adviser, at a 29 March meeting concerning the fighting. "Are there no more ships? No surface forces?" Oikawa was mortified by the implication that the navy, most of whose ships now lie at the bottom of the Pacific Ocean, was not doing enough. So on 6 April Yamato sailed from Kure Harbour to die at Okinawa, covered in glory for the good of the navy. "The fate of

YAMATO



The Japanese super battleship Yamato undergoing sea trials in late 1941



Yamato's senior officers prior to the start of Operation Ten-ichigo



Yamato in dock fitting out, September 1941

THE MIGHTY BATTLESHIP YAMATO

Yamato was enormous, measuring 263m (863ft) stem to stern. She displaced 70,000 tons and was 40 per cent bigger than the battleships of the Iowa class, the US Navy's largest. Its superstructure, dominated by the mast and raked funnel, was like a fortress bedecked with guns. Enough steel went into the hull to lay a railway track between Tokyo and Osaka. Yamato bore a full load of munitions for all of its weapons on 7 April 1945.

TYPE 96 25MM ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS

Yamato had 152 Type 96 25mm (0.98in) anti-aircraft guns, with 50 in triple mounts and two single mounts.

FUNNEL

AIRCRAFT CATAPULTS

TURRETS

STERN

NAKAJIMA SCOUT AIRCRAFT

The Yamato embarked seven Nakajima floatplanes to conduct reconnaissance. They were launched from catapults at the stern of the ship.

TYPE 89 127MM GUNS

The Yamato carried six Type 89 twin 127mm (5in) naval guns, with three on each side of the citadel.

ENGINES

Yamato was powered through the waves by four propellers connected to four steam turbines and driven by 12 boilers, which produced 150,000 shp. It gave her a top speed above 27 knots.

the navy rests on this one action," her crewmen were portentously told as they departed.

Despite her awesome power, Yamato has seen little combat, having engaged the Americans briefly during the Battle of Leyte Gulf in October 1944. The ship has been outmoded since the start of the Pacific War. The strike on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941 proved that aircraft carriers, not battleships, were now the arbiters of war at sea. A mere two days later, the Japanese confirmed the vulnerability of surface warships to aircraft when their planes struck and sank the Royal Navy's HMS Prince of Wales and HMS Repulse. Surface ships, however powerful, were extremely vulnerable to air attack unless themselves protected by fighters, and so for much of the war Yamato has been kept sheltered in home waters, awaiting a decisive battle with American battleships that will never come.

The Surface Special Attack Force is under the overall command of Vice Admiral Seiichi Ito, who uses Yamato as his flagship, while the ship herself is under the direction of Captain Kosaku Ariga. Ito is aghast at what he considers the purposeless waste of his ships and the lives of his men, but he keeps such thoughts from them. Yet the crewmen of Yamato are under no illusion that Ten-ichigo can end in anything besides her destruction. It is a suicide mission. They have been ordered, preposterously, that if they manage to survive long enough to reach the island, they are to arm themselves and go ashore to continue the fight. Many sailors,

aware of what is to come, have written their last letters home to their loved ones.

Awaiting Yamato and the ships of the Second Destroyer Squadron that accompanies it on this death ride is the US Fifth Fleet, riding high at the peak of its wartime might. The Yamato crewmen know they have been spotted by an American submarine, but they are deeply upset that the Americans have radioed their position to the rest of the fleet without even encoding the message, as if they are not taking the great battleship seriously enough.

On Yamato, rice balls and black tea are served to the crew, who sing patriotic songs and shout "Banzai!", the traditional Japanese battle cry. Ariga, a popular captain, allows some of his younger officers to affectionately pat his bald pate. There is a limit to the levity, however. In contemplation of the swarm of American aircraft that is sure to assail them, one sailor asks morbidly but with true prescience, "Which country showed the world what airplanes could do by sinking Prince of Wales?"

"ITO IS AGHAST AT WHAT HE CONSIDERS THE PURPOSELESS WASTE OF HIS SHIPS AND THE LIVES OF HIS MEN, BUT HE KEEPS SUCH THOUGHTS FROM THEM"

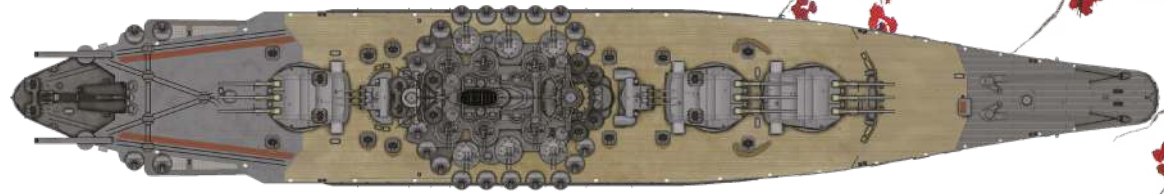
Ensign Yoshida finds that one of his fellows, Ensign Sakei Katono, is reading Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, while Yoshida buries himself in a biography of Baruch Spinoza. He also sees that another ensign, Kunio Nakatani, is weeping into his pillow. The assistant communications officer aboard Yamato is a Japanese-American from California who was studying in Japan and had the misfortune to find himself stranded there when the war began. He has received, at long last – just before Yamato sailed on her final voyage – a letter from his mother in America, that reaches him via neutral Switzerland. He will never see her again.

A reconnaissance plane operating off the aircraft carrier USS Essex spies the flotilla at 8.15am on 7 April. Over the following four hours, the Americans doggedly track Yamato and the other ships of the flotilla. Admiral Raymond Spruance, commanding officer of the Fifth Fleet at Okinawa, at first decides to keep his carrier fighters close by to provide cover against the swarming kamikazes and instead sends a powerful squadron of battleships to confront the onrushing Japanese ships. Yamato, it seems, will finally get to fulfill her purpose and duel valiantly with her American peers.

Then Spruance cancels his order. Vice Admiral Marc Mitscher, the commander of the carrier aircraft of Task Force 58, convinces him that his planes will be better dealing with the immense Japanese warship. At 10.00am 280 planes from no fewer than ten aircraft carriers launch themselves into the leaden Pacific sky,

RADAR

Three different radar sets were carried by the battleship, including a Type 13 air search radar, Type 21 air and surface search radar and a Type 22 surface search radar.



TOWER

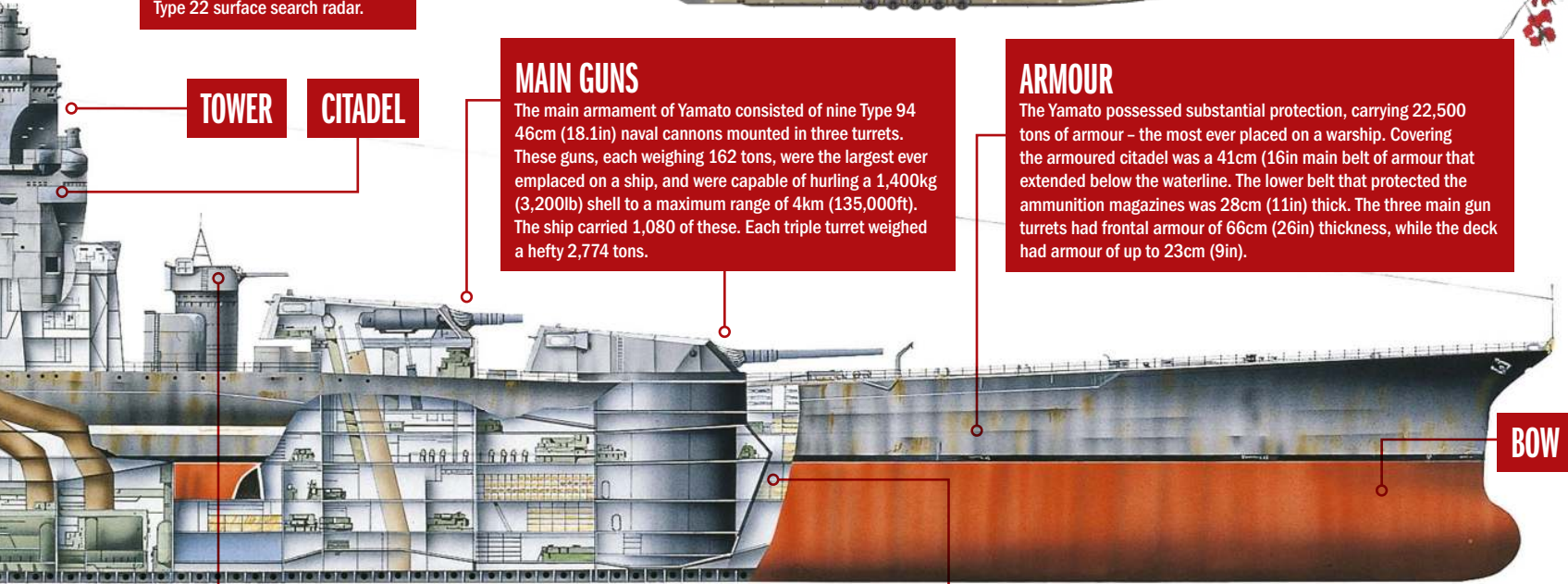
CITADEL

MAIN GUNS

The main armament of Yamato consisted of nine Type 94 46cm (18.1in) naval cannons mounted in three turrets. These guns, each weighing 162 tons, were the largest ever emplaced on a ship, and were capable of hurling a 1,400kg (3,200lb) shell to a maximum range of 4km (135,000ft). The ship carried 1,080 of these. Each triple turret weighed a hefty 2,774 tons.

ARMOUR

The Yamato possessed substantial protection, carrying 22,500 tons of armour – the most ever placed on a warship. Covering the armoured citadel was a 41cm (16in main belt of armour that extended below the waterline. The lower belt that protected the ammunition magazines was 28cm (11in) thick. The three main gun turrets had frontal armour of 66cm (26in) thickness, while the deck had armour of up to 23cm (9in).



BOW

155MM DUAL-PURPOSE NAVAL GUNS

The secondary armament of Yamato consisted of six 155mm (6.1in) cannons in two triple gun turrets. They were capable of taking on targets in the air and on the surface.

CREW

The Yamato required an enormous crew of some 3,300 men to operate her. Most were berthed below deck ahead of the forward turrets. Crew accommodations were relatively generous, earning her the nickname 'Hotel Yamato'.

“AT 10.00AM 280 PLANES FROM NO FEWER THAN TEN AIRCRAFT CARRIERS LAUNCH THEMSELVES INTO THE LEADEN PACIFIC SKY, DESTINED FOR A BLOODY RENDEZVOUS WITH YAMATO”

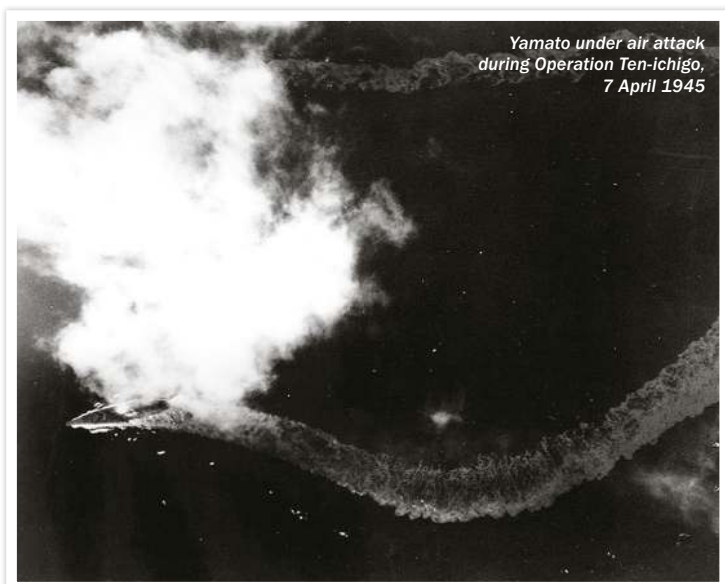


Curtiss Helldivers fly over an American aircraft carrier in 1945. Carriers had surpassed battleships as the dominant force on the oceans by WWII

“YAMATO’S EXECUTIVE OFFICER, REAR ADMIRAL NOBII MORISHITA, CAN’T HELP BUT ADMIRE THE PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE OF THE ATTACKERS. ‘BEAUTIFULLY DONE, ISN’T IT?’ HE SAYS”



The Yamato receiving direct hits from US planes during the attack on 7 April 1945



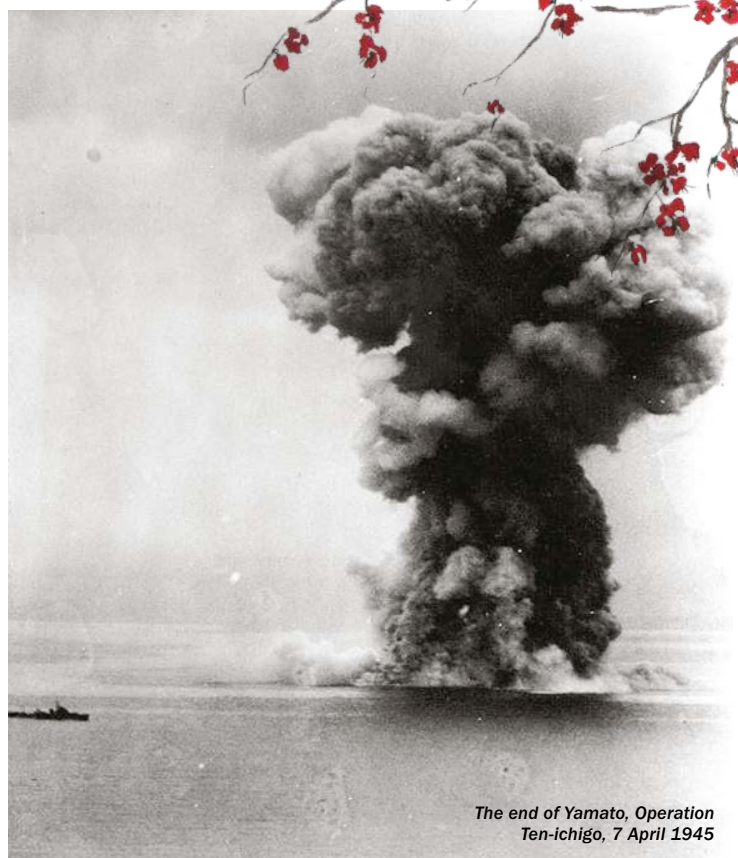
Yamato under air attack during Operation Ten-ichigo, 7 April 1945



Curtiss Helldivers go on the attack, 7 April 1945



Yamato attacked by American carrier planes



The end of Yamato, Operation Ten-ichigo, 7 April 1945

destined for a fateful rendezvous with the approaching Yamato.

At 12.00pm Admiral Ito sits on the bridge of Yamato and smiles. He says cheerfully, "We got through the morning all right, didn't we?" The battleship's good fortune will not last long. Just 20 minutes later Yamato's air search radar detects the approaching American aircraft. The Japanese ships are bereft of fighter cover. Their only defences will be the anti-aircraft guns aboard. Then the attacks begin – the first wave of many in a sea of fire and smoke.

Yamato's anti-aircraft batteries and those of her escorts open up in defence. The ferocious fire sent skyward – a prismatic, tracer-lit torrent of searing metal – does the Japanese ships little good. The Americans manoeuvre their machines with great skill. Yoshida grimly observes that their highly trained pilots fly in a straight course only long enough to drop their bombs or torpedoes, then hurriedly zigzag away. The sheer number of aircraft also works in the Americans' favour, as the Japanese gun crews find themselves overwhelmed with a multiplicity of fast-moving targets.

In all, 364 American carrier aircraft pounce on Yamato and the ships in her escort. The light cruiser Yahagi, the lead ship of the Second Destroyer Squadron, goes down after being struck by seven torpedoes and 12 bombs, while US aircraft also hammer the destroyers. It is Yamato, however, that receives the greatest attention from the American fliers. They concentrate their torpedo strikes on the port side of the ship to cause her to list quickly.

Wave after wave of Avenger torpedo bombers and Helldiver dive bombers, protected by Corsair and Hellcat fighters, surge over Yamato. Yamato's executive officer, Rear Admiral Nobii Morishita, can't help but admire the

“THE FEROCIOUS FIRE SENT SKYWARD – A PRISMATIC, TRACER-LIT TORRENT OF SEARING METAL – DOES THE JAPANESE SHIPS LITTLE GOOD”

professional competence of the attackers. 'Beautifully done, isn't it?' he says. She is hit by one torpedo after another. Between 11 and 13 strike her, together with no fewer than eight bombs. There are many more near-misses, and she lists worryingly to port. She takes on thousands of gallons of seawater to counter the listing, but to little avail. The waves crash over her port side. At 2.10pm a bomb strikes her rudder, damaging it and knocking out all power in the ship. She can no longer manoeuvre. Yoshida spies a thin, human-sized length of flesh dangling from a rangefinder. Her crew has been equally savaged.

Another wave of enemy planes bears down on Yamato. "Don't lose heart," Captain Ariga keeps urging the surviving men on the bridge. But there is no hope for Ten-ichigo. Admiral Ito's flotilla has been shredded by American airpower to no purpose, just as he had expected. Like Yahagi, most of the destroyers have been smashed. He calls off the operation and commands his remaining ships to return home after picking up survivors of disabled ships. After giving this order, he goes to his cabin and closes the door behind him. He will never emerge. Captain Ariga calls his crew to Yamato's deck as water floods the stricken vessel and orders them to abandon ship.

He will not be leaving with them. Ariga binds himself to a binnacle so that he will go down with his ship. "Long live the emperor!" he cries.

Yamato's severe list is now reaching an astonishing 90 degrees to port. As she continues to roll, the giant shells she stows for her main guns slip and slide in their magazines, their fuses striking bulkheads and overheads. They begin to detonate. By 2.23pm Yamato is completely upside down and begins to sink. The greatest of these blasts consumes her, sending up a mushroom cloud of fiery smoke that can be seen all the way back in Japan.

Ensign Yoshida is indescribably lucky. The plunging Yamato was about to pull him under in its whirlpool when this final explosion propels him back to the surface. He will live. The remains of the battered Yamato finally sink in 883 metres (2,700 feet) of water. Yoshida, who will become a bank executive after the war, is plucked from the oil-choked water by the destroyer Fuyutsuki. He writes his *Requiem for Battleship Yamato* years later, calling Ten-ichigo "An operation that will live in naval annals for its recklessness and stupidity."

The Japanese navy loses seven ships in Ten-ichigo, including Yamato, along with 4,250 sailors. Only three destroyers escape the carnage. The US Navy's losses are much lighter – a mere ten warplanes and 12 airmen. When Emperor Hirohito learns of the failure of the operation and the loss of Yamato, he raises his hand to his head and sways. "Gone?" he says in shocked disbelief. "She's gone?"

The Okinawa invasion will not be stopped. It continues until late June, when the last Japanese resistance is crushed. Of the 3,300 crewmen of Yamato, just 269 survive. Her dead are the among the first casualties in the Okinawa campaign. They are not the last.

FV603 SARACEN

ARMoured PERSONNEL CARRIER

WORDS MIKE HASKEW



In response to post-World War II global unrest, the British military deployed the sturdy Saracen armoured personnel carrier

In the wake of World War II, civil and political unrest emerged with renewed vigour in hot spots around the world. The British Empire was not immune to the rise of militant communist and nationalist insurgencies, particularly in Malaya, the Middle East and Northern Ireland.

Tactical transport of combat troops in both urban environments and open country was evolving simultaneously as the British military establishment sought an improved method of deployment – one that offered a degree of safety while also providing at least minimal defensive capabilities. The British Fighting Vehicle Research and Development Establishment conceived a series of armoured vehicles to provide support and transportation for ground

troops during combat conditions. The result was the Alvis FV600 family of vehicles that also included the FV601 Saladin Armoured Car and successors such as the FV101 Scorpion reconnaissance vehicle, FV102 Striker anti-tank guided missile carrier, FV103 Spartan armoured personnel carrier and the AVLB bridge layer.

Conceptually, light armoured vehicles could be produced rapidly and cost-effectively with armoured protection capable of warding off small-arms fire and even some anti-tank projectiles, while out-muscling the firepower of most guerrilla groups. Research on the light vehicle idea had begun during World War II, and the pace quickened with the onset of the Cold War era.

The Saladin and Saracen shared numerous components, and their development was somewhat concurrent. However, the need for armoured vehicles to combat the guerrilla insurgency in Malaya in the late 1940s gave the Saracen production priority. In 1952 the venerable Alvis Car and Engineering Company began fabrication of the six-wheel-drive Saracen at its Coventry facility. The first vehicles were fielded in December of that year. Although its service life as the primary troop carrier of the British Army stretched only into the mid-1960s, the Saracen has remained a viable platform for counterinsurgency and military operations for decades, particularly as an export product.

**“THE SARACEN HAS REMAINED A VIABLE
PLATFORM FOR COUNTERINSURGENCY
AND MILITARY OPERATIONS
FOR DECADES”**



FV603 SARACEN APC

COMMISSIONED 1953 **ORIGIN** UNITED KINGDOM
LENGTH 4.80 METRES (15.75 FEET) **CREW** 2
RANGE 400 KILOMETRES (249 MILES)
ENGINE ROLLS-ROYCE B80 MK 6A 8-CYLINDER PETROL
PRIMARY WEAPONS BROWNING M1919 .30-CALIBRE
MACHINE GUN OR L37 GENERAL-PURPOSE MACHINE GUN
SECONDARY WEAPONS BREN .303-CALIBRE LIGHT
MACHINE GUN; 6 SMOKE GRENADE LAUNCHERS

“THE HIGH SILHOUETTE WAS A NECESSITY TO SEAT TROOPS UPRIGHT AND ACCOMMODATE A COMPLEX DRIVETRAIN AND FUEL TANKS BENEATH THE FLOOR”

A British soldier rides atop an FV603 Saracen. The vehicle's height is evident, but the Saracen has compiled an impressive service record despite this hazardous design



DESIGN

The 12-ton FV603 Saracen armoured personnel carrier was designed to safely traverse the battlefield, combining maximum armour protection with acceptable maneuverability. Designers incorporated 16mm of rolled homogenous armour for survivability and included hinged firing ports on either side of the crew compartment. The high silhouette was a necessity to seat troops upright and accommodate a complex drivetrain and fuel tanks beneath the floor. The six-wheel-drive FV603 design included three independent axles with steel-rimmed rubber road wheels, allowing the vehicle to function with the simultaneous loss of one wheel on each side. A small, enclosed turret was sometimes fitted to the roofline to mount a machine gun or water cannon.

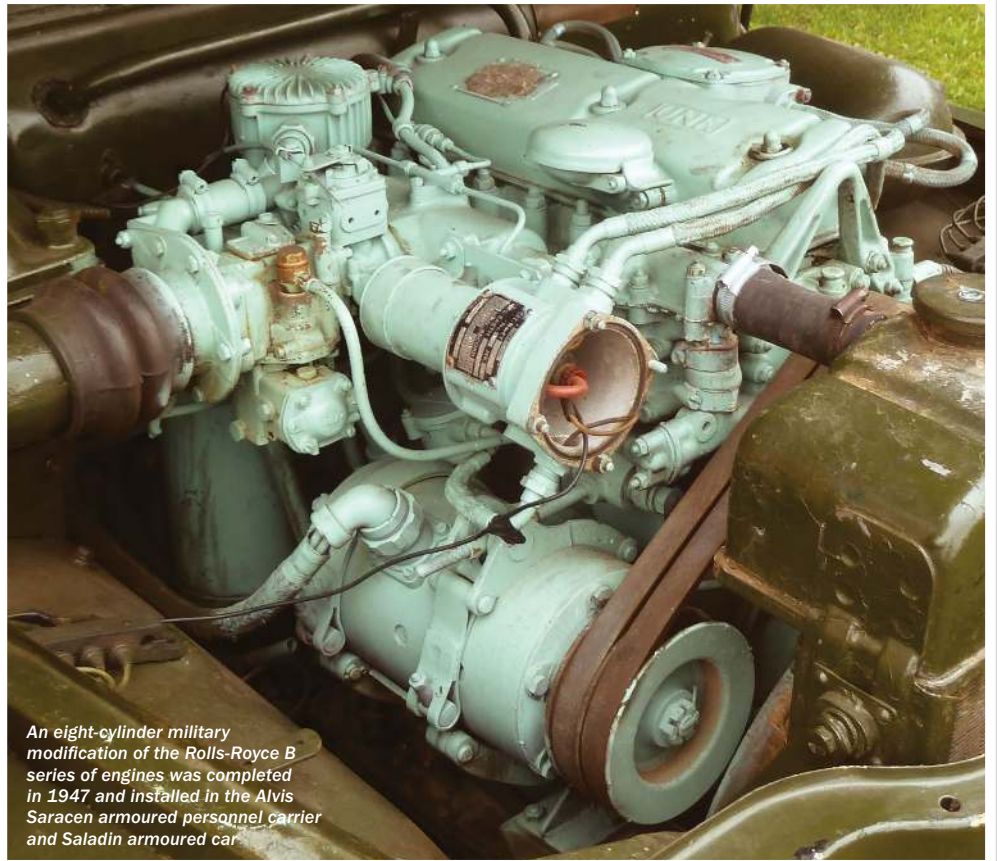


One of six smoke grenade launchers mounted to the hull of the Saracen. Smoke grenade launchers are utilised for both offensive and defensive purposes

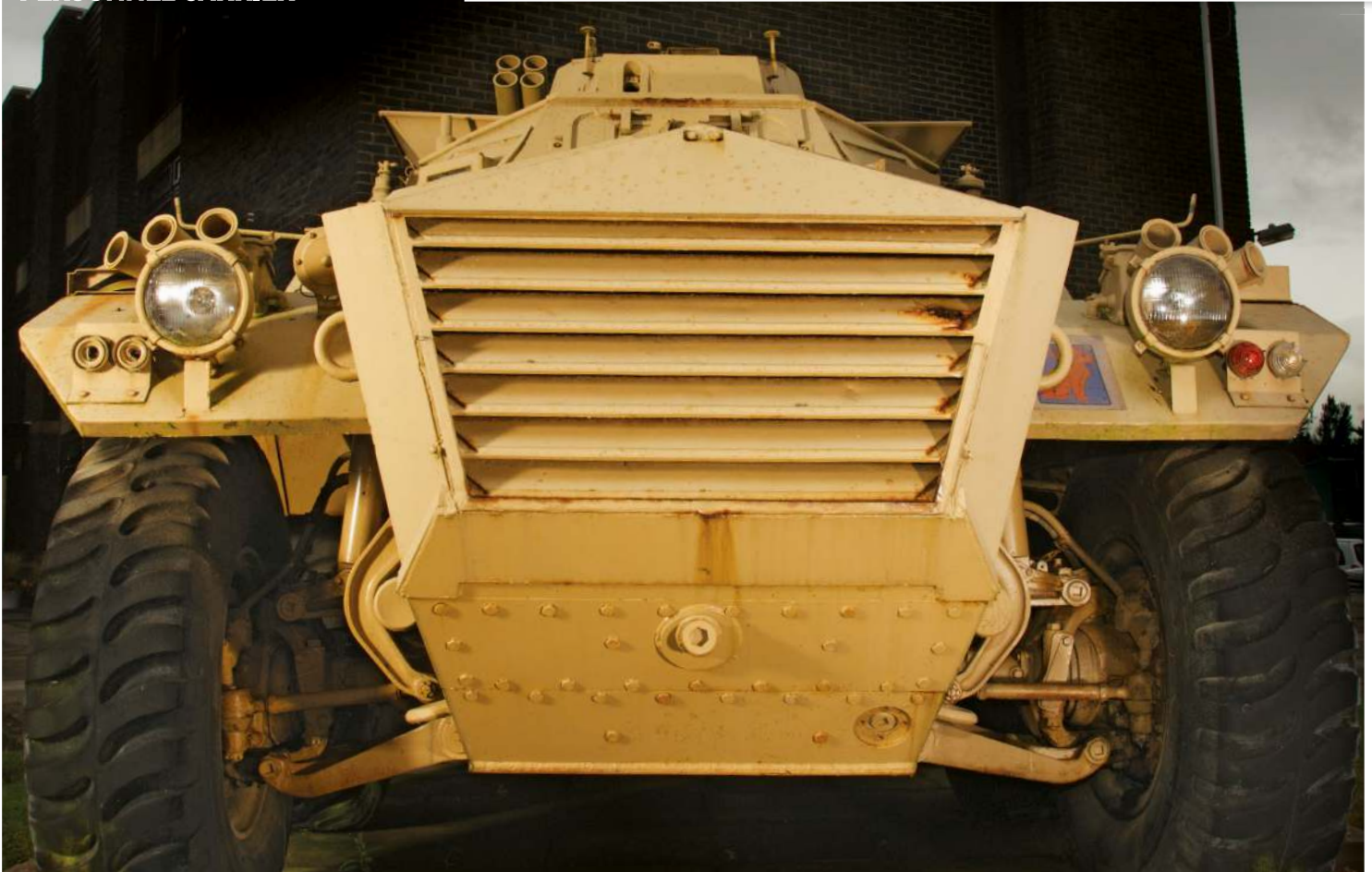
ENGINE

The development of the Rolls-Royce B series of engines began prior to World War II, followed by research into a suitable variant that could be employed with military vehicles. An engineering team supervised by W.A. Robotham at Rolls-Royce Clan Foundry in Belper, Derbyshire, finished the development of the Meteor engine in 1943 and followed with the military adaptation of an eight-cylinder variant of the 160-horsepower petrol engine that was later installed in the prototype Alvis FV603 Saracen armoured personnel carrier, FV601 Saladin armoured car and others in the Alvis line. The modifications were completed by 1947, and production began at Rolls-Royce Crewe.

“THE MILITARY ADAPTATION OF AN EIGHT-CYLINDER VARIANT OF THE 160-HORSEPOWER PETROL ENGINE... WAS LATER INSTALLED IN THE PROTOTYPE ALVIS FV603 SARACEN ARMOURD PERSONNEL CARRIER”



An eight-cylinder military modification of the Rolls-Royce B series of engines was completed in 1947 and installed in the Alvis Saracen armoured personnel carrier and Saladin armoured car.



The pictured FV603 Saracen Armoured Personnel Carrier is on display at the Royal Signals Museum, Blandford Forum. For more information visit www.royalsignalsmuseum.co.uk

The six-wheel-drive Saracen was designed to take a pounding during cross-country operations, as this image of its rugged wheels and suspension attests





This Saracen has been fitted with a turret. The engine was placed forward and readily accessible for maintenance and repairs

“IT FIRED UP TO 1,000 ROUNDS PER MINUTE WITH AN EFFECTIVE RANGE OF 800 METRES”



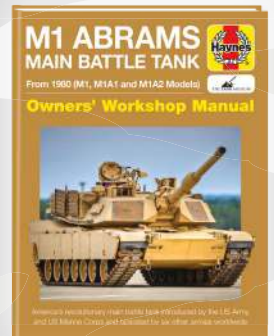
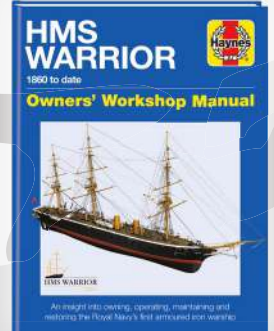
The small turret crowning this Saracen was capable of mounting a water cannon or machine gun. Also note the firing ports that allowed troops to engage the enemy from within

ARMAMENT

The FV603 Saracen armoured personnel carrier mounted either the Browning .30-calibre M1919 machine gun or the 7.62mm L37 general-purpose machine gun. The Browning was deployed with Allied troops during World War II and American forces in Korea and Vietnam. Fed by a 250-round ammunition belt, its rate of fire approached 600 rounds per minute, effective up to 1,400 metres (4,500 feet). The L37 variant of the Belgian Fabrique Nationale FN MAG 7.62mm machine gun was modified for armoured vehicles. It fired up to 1,000 rounds per minute with an effective range of 800 metres (2625 feet). A .303-calibre Bren light machine gun firing up to 520 rounds per minute effective to 550 metres (1,800 feet) provided secondary armament. Six smoke grenade launchers were mounted.



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INTERIOR

The driver of the FV603 Saracen armoured personnel carrier was positioned in the centre of the hull with the vehicle commander also in a centred crew cabin to the rear. Radio and other communications equipment were situated to the commander's immediate right. Unlike the FV601 Saladin, the engine of the FV603 Saracen was placed forward and ventilated via a large grill with pronounced slats. Depending on interior configuration, the crew cabin provided space for nine or ten combat-ready soldiers seated on benches. The troops entered and exited the vehicle through a pair of large hinged rectangular doors at the rear.



The driver was positioned forward in the centre of the vehicle

SERVICE HISTORY

THE FV603 SARACEN PARTICIPATED IN MILITARY AND CIVIL OPERATIONS AROUND THE WORLD AND IS STILL IN SERVICE IN SOME COUNTRIES TODAY

Although it was replaced in the early 1960s by the tracked FV432 armoured personnel carrier, the 20-year production run of the FV603 Saracen continued until 1972. A total of 1,838 vehicles were completed. The FV603 has remained active in the arsenals of Middle Eastern and Asian countries into the 21st century and served with the British Army in support and civil defence roles throughout the 1980s. It was first deployed with British troops during the 1948-1960 'Malayan Emergency', a protracted anti-communist guerrilla war.

The FV603 was also deployed to post-World War II Libya during British military administration of the former Italian colony and during the Radfan Uprising in Aden and southern Arabia in 1963. Its relatively light weight allowed for air transportation, and its complement of machine guns and

smoke grenade launchers was effective against opposing ground forces as well as low-flying aircraft. During the 1950s the Saracen was controversially supplied to South Africa while the country remained a member of the Commonwealth, and despite opposition spare parts were delivered under contract until 1968. Four Saracens were deployed by South African police forces during the infamous Sharpeville Massacre in 1960.

As violence and civil unrest escalated during 'The Troubles' in Northern Ireland in the late 1960s, the Saracen played a key role in maintaining order in the streets of Belfast, Londonderry and other population centres. A number of vehicles were fitted with water cannon to disperse crowds by non-lethal means. In the summer of 1981 a Saracen was totally destroyed when a bomb hidden in a culvert by the South Armagh Brigade of the Provisional Irish Republican Army detonated, killing five British soldiers.

The Saracen was utilised by the Lebanese army during the country's civil war from 1975-1990 and by the Sri Lankan army during the civil war of 1983-2009.



The Saracen was utilised extensively during the civil unrest in Northern Ireland in the 1960s

Images: Getty

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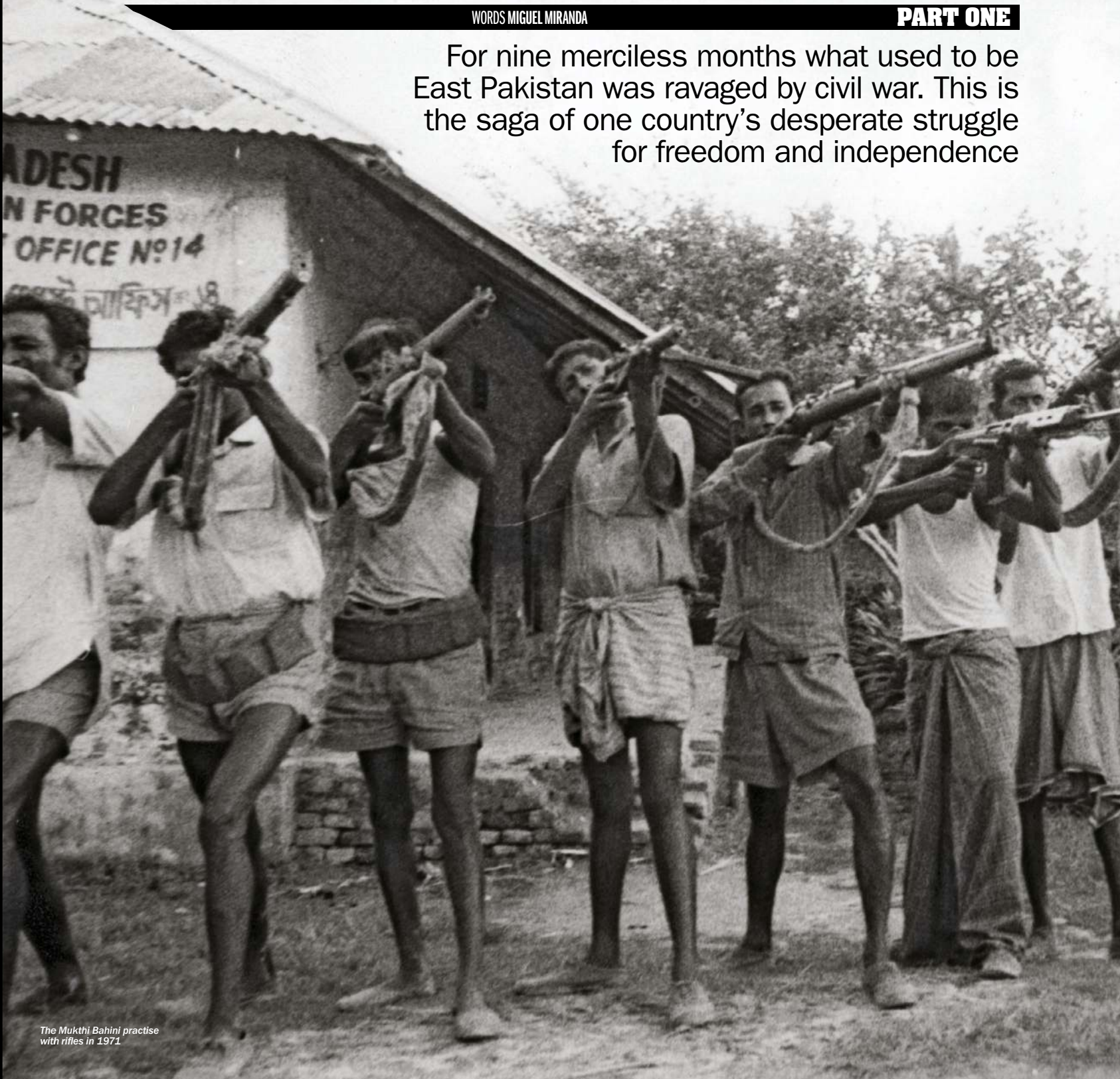
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BRUTAL BIRTH OF BANGLADESH

WORDS MIGUEL MIRANDA

PART ONE

For nine merciless months what used to be East Pakistan was ravaged by civil war. This is the saga of one country's desperate struggle for freedom and independence



The Mukti Bahini practise with rifles in 1971

Few conflicts in the late-20th century witnessed as much carnage as the events that shook East Pakistan from March to December 1971. The turbulent episode is often remembered as a stirring triumph orchestrated by imaginative Indian generals, but this *coup de main* only occurred in the final month of the war. Before that, the citizens of newly independent Bangladesh lived through indescribable horror.

The origins of the war date to the partition facilitated by the British at the end of their dominion over South Asia. In 1947 this partition created India and its troubled adversary Pakistan – the latter a geopolitical experiment that aspired to create a modern secular state for a multi-ethnic Muslim nation.

The existence of Pakistan, conceived by its urbane founding father Muhammad Ali Jinnah, meant a confederation of the Punjab, Kashmir and the Pashtun regions of Afghanistan. The scope of its territorial expanse became

problematic when a local separatist movement flourished in Balochistan, while Kashmir's ownership triggered a war with India.

Yet the most troubled portion of this confederation was East Pakistan, which had a majority Bengali population whose numbers had swelled to 72 million by 1970. Separated from West Pakistan by the Indian landmass, the East soon felt alienated, politically and culturally, from the West.

It took the dysfunctional domestic politics of West Pakistan to start the dominoes falling. In 1969 the decorated war veteran and armed forces chief Yahya Khan replaced the civilian president Ayub Khan. The Peshawar-born Pashtun was a career soldier who had fought under the British in Iraq and East Africa during World War II and had endured captivity in an Axis prison camp.

By the time he assumed power, Yahya Khan enjoyed widespread support, despite imposing a martial law regime over the whole of Pakistan. Wishing to restore civilian leadership, national

elections were held the following year. This was when the trouble started, for the Bengali nationalists of the Awami League swept nearly all of the contested parliamentary seats.

This brought them into conflict with the ruling Pakistan People's Party led by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who dreamt of the prime ministership for himself.

Yahya Khan knew full well the implications of the Awami League's ascendance. If its leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman became prime minister he would have a solid bloc in parliament to alter the constitution and possibly grant East Pakistan autonomy.

To make matters worse, in November 1970 a powerful cyclone barreled into East Pakistan, leaving a terrible death toll in its wake. Half a million people were killed by floods, and an inadequate response to the emergency by the government fuelled Bengali resentment towards West Pakistan's political class.

As distrust toward the Awami League grew and rumours of rebellion swirled, Yahya Khan



**“SEPARATED FROM WEST PAKISTAN
BY THE INDIAN LANDMASS, THE EAST
SOON FELT ALIENATED, POLITICALLY AND
CULTURALLY, FROM THE WEST”**

ordered the deployment of troops to suppress any widespread protests in Dhaka, the regional capital and elsewhere. This posed a challenge for Pakistan's military, whose aircraft were prohibited from flying overland across India. The only alternative route was a circuit from Karachi to Sri Lanka and then on to a dozen airbases in East Pakistan.

The axe fell on 25 March – an auspicious date that was chosen to catch the Awami League and its partisans off guard. Within a week Pakistani soldiers, who were led by Punjabi, Pashtun, and Muhajir officers, rounded up hundreds of dissidents for mass executions. The violence soon spread to East Pakistan's villages in the wetlands beyond the capital. Panic and fear set in as the death toll passed several thousand.

Reign of terror

India was a cautious actor in this travesty. As far as Delhi was concerned, the threat posed by Pakistan was concentrated in Kashmir. The last two wars, in 1947 and 1965, proved this. But the chaos that suddenly engulfed East Pakistan was far from a window of opportunity. There are no known records that suggest any covert meddling and subterfuge directed by India had stoked the fires of Bengali secessionism before 1971.

By April of that year, however, the Awami League's cadres had fled to Calcutta and established a government in exile. As thousands of Bengalis spilled over the border in increasing numbers, rough plans were put

“ON 10 APRIL 1971 THE INDEPENDENCE OF A NEW COUNTRY WAS DECLARED. ITS NAME WAS BANGLADESH, AND ITS PEOPLE WERE THIRSTING FOR REVENGE”

together by Sheikh Rahman's surviving cabinet for a guerrilla war.

The Bengalis had always laboured under the institutional discrimination imposed on them by West Pakistan bureaucrats and administrators. This was more apparent in the armed forces, where Bengali officers faced serious barriers to promotion, and units were organised along ethnic lines. During the March crackdown thousands of soldiers, such as the once-loyal East Bengal Rifles, mutinied and fled with their arms. The same occurred among students, civil servants and commoners who had suffered personal losses and witnessed their family, friends and loved ones butchered because of Yahya Khan's vindictiveness.

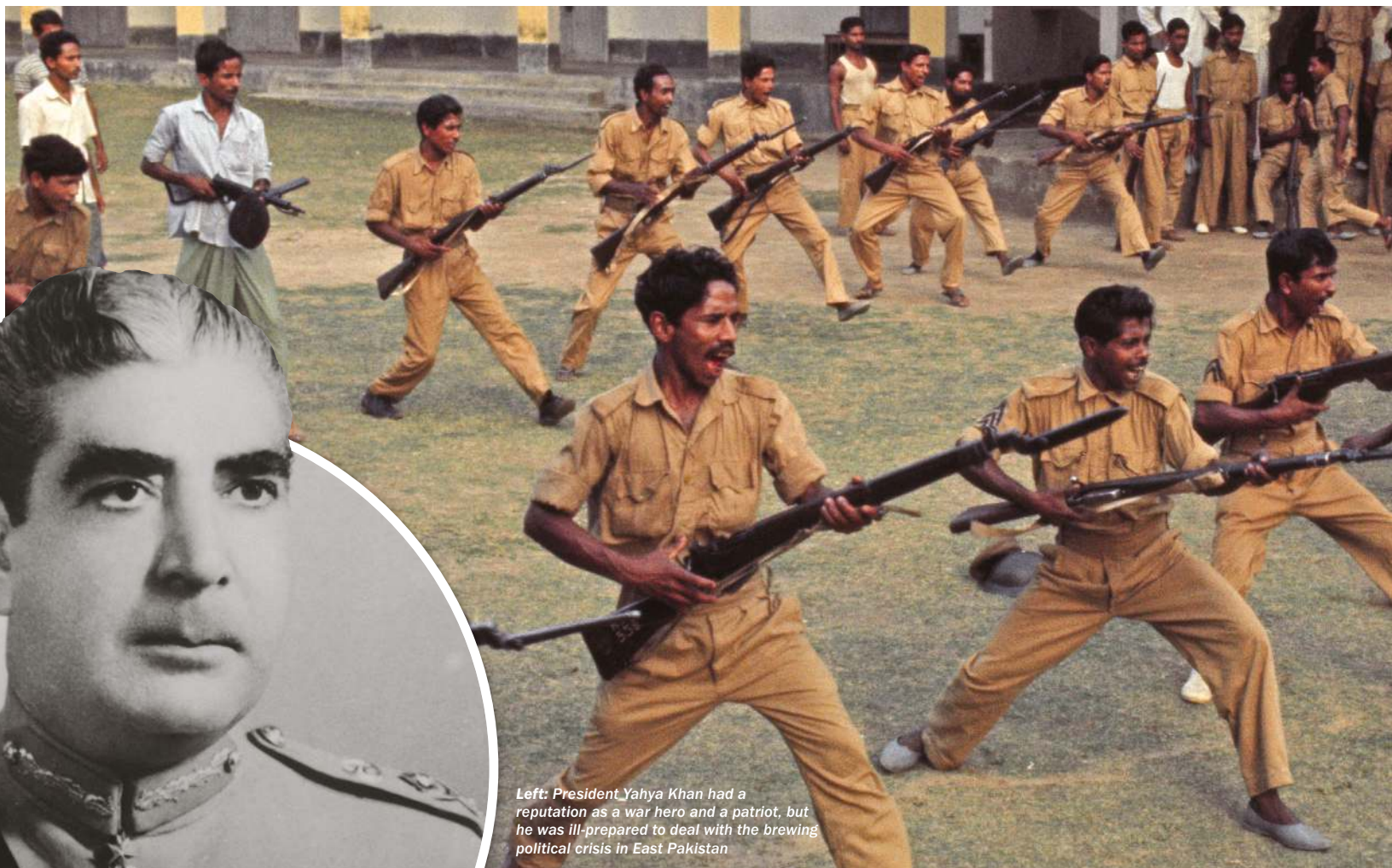
On 10 April 1971 the independence of a new country was declared. Its name was Bangladesh, and its people were thirsting for revenge. Rebel deserters and young patriots, many of them just boys, were hastily organised and placed under the command of Muhammad Ataul Gani Osmani, a decorated officer recognisable for his handlebar moustache and stoic professionalism. The newly promoted General Osmani was the first head of the meagre armed forces that had the almost

impossible task of extricating the Pakistani forces from the new country.

This new fighting institution assumed the name 'Mukti Bahini', a title derived from an earlier non-violent grassroots movement set up by the Awami League before the war. Other rebel factions existed, such as local communist militias and a handful of local partisan groups, but their dismal coordination and smaller numbers reduced them to footnotes in the broader struggle.

The Indian prime minister Indira Gandhi's administration wasn't eager to embrace the Bengali resistance too soon, as the refugee problem absorbed Delhi's attention. The only tangible support the Mukti Bahini received in the first months of the war was limited backing from the Border Security Force, which functioned as India's centurions along its rugged frontiers.

Still, General Osmani wasted no time in trying to establish a working order of battle. The untested Bangladesh Armed Forces had three broad groupings. These were Force-K, Force-S and Force-Z. Each was roughly the size of a regiment but was lightly armed. The most widely available weapons were old Lee Enfields and Bren machine guns. It remains doubtful



Left: President Yahya Khan had a reputation as a war hero and a patriot, but he was ill-prepared to deal with the brewing political crisis in East Pakistan

MODERN-DAY MAMELUKES

whether the Mukti Bahini ever fielded anything larger than mortars or pack howitzers.

Despite their best efforts, the Mukti Bahini's guerrilla campaign from late March until early May faltered and almost cost them the war. Simply put, their planning, logistics and resources were so limited that no meaningful action was able to dislodge the Pakistani military, who were spread across Bangladesh's towns and villages.

From a geographical perspective, Bangladesh's multitude of rivers and tributaries made it an ideal setting for asymmetrical combat. In practice, however, Pakistan's brutality, close air support and seasoned leadership blunted the Mukti Bahini's more ambitious efforts. Another weakness was the guerrilla force's half-hearted attempts at fighting pitched battles that always saw them defeated by the superior Pakistani forces.

The quality of Pakistan's soldiers was badly underestimated. The highest ranking Pakistani commander in Bangladesh, Lieutenant General A.A.K. Niazi, was a fine example of the army's calibre. As a junior officer in World War II he had fought in Burma. Like many of his peers, Niazi rose through the ranks and distinguished himself in battle. Furthermore, many Pakistani officers had valuable experience battling insurgents either in Balochistan or along the Durand Line.

By May 1971 the Mukti Bahini's operations within Bangladesh had diminished to insignificance. Rather than celebrate victory,

INDIA'S NEMESIS FIELDED A BATTLE-HARDENED ARMY LED BY SOME OF THE MOST SKILLED OFFICERS IN ASIA

In 1971 the Bangladeshi nationalists found themselves up against an implacable foe.

Almost a quarter of a century prior, the British Raj's Punjabi regiments and officers formed the nucleus of Pakistan's armed forces. Faced with the numerically superior Hindu military of India, Pakistan's soldiers turned to elaborate alliances to level the odds.

As a member of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) and a dependable US ally, Pakistan received billions of dollars in aid and commensurate diplomatic support from Washington, DC. In 1971 the CIA estimated Pakistan's armed forces had a total manpower of 284,000 troops.

In the 1960s its ground forces trained with hundreds of new M47 and M48 Patton tanks, M110 self-propelled howitzers and fought with an assortment of American, British, Chinese, French and German small arms.

The air force in particular was quite formidable after receiving 120 F-86 Saber jets in the

1950s and squadrons of the cutting-edge F-104 Starfighter later on. After the 1965 war the fighter pilot Muhammad Mahmood Alam was celebrated for his nine confirmed kills – possibly the deadliest air combat record in the jet age.

The Pakistan navy, limited as it was, had minesweepers and patrol boats that had been passed on from the US Navy, but this maritime force was dismissed by most assessments as somewhat unimpressive.

By 1971 Pakistan had already fought India twice – in 1947 over Kashmir and in the northern deserts of Rajasthan in 1965. Both conflicts saw India prevail through persistence and sheer manpower.

The 1971 war was a different kind of campaign, however. Pakistan's soldiers were tasked with suppressing a nationalist revolt, and these actions compelled an intervention from a worried India.

Although East Pakistan looked well defended on paper, the reality was that local forces were limited to infantry, supported by a few tanks and even fewer aircraft. These units could only be supplied by a precarious air route, and supplies were insufficient for a conventional war.

Despite this, the West Pakistanis proved more than a match for the Mukti Bahini, a modest guerrilla force armed with .303 Lee Enfields.

“THE AIR FORCE IN PARTICULAR WAS QUITE FORMIDABLE AFTER RECEIVING 120 F-86 SABER JETS IN THE 1950s”

The country that used to be called East Pakistan spreads over a flood plain. By 1970 its population had swelled to 72 million people



OPPOSING FORCES IN THE LIBERATION WAR

MARCH-AUGUST 1971

PAKISTAN ARMY

100,000 TROOPS + PARAMILITARIES
5 ARTILLERY REGIMENTS
84 TANKS
23 F-86 SABRES
8 LIGHT DESTROYERS
1 DESTROYER
4 GUNBOATS

MUKTI BAHINI

< 30,000 GUERRILLAS



The Mukti Bahini were organised under the guidance of former East Pakistan officers. After a failed guerrilla war in early 1971, they trained for conventional battles together with regular Indian army units

“WITH THE MUKTI BAHINI’S RESISTANCE IN DISARRAY, PAKISTANI ATROCITIES CONTINUED UNCHECKED. ALMOST EVERY TESTIMONY FROM BENGALI REFUGEES DESCRIBED FRIGHTFUL SCENES OF CARNAGE AND RAPINE”

Two Pakistani soldiers and an M20 Super Bazooka lie in wait. On 21 November 1971 the Mukti Bahini and their Indian allies unleashed a blitz on the unprepared Pakistani Army

Lieutenant General Niazi and his staff were anticipating a broader war with India. The turmoil in Bangladesh had gone on long enough to draw the world’s attention, and the great powers were now compelled to weigh in on the quagmire unfolding in South Asia.

Meanwhile in Islamabad, Yahya Khan knew that Pakistan’s alliance with the US could break at any moment. Keenly aware of this, Pakistan’s military brass had sought closer ties with China since the 1965 war with India, when sanctions deprived Pakistan of American spare parts and ordnance. The Chinese hedging paid off to a certain extent. China had been at odds with India since the brief 1962 war over Arunachal Pradesh, and Pakistan’s courtship meant new J-7 fighter jets and medium tanks, along with thousands of small arms, were passed on to Pakistan’s military.

The armies assemble

India had its own alliances: it had cultivated a deep and lasting relationship with Moscow since the days of Jawaharlal Nehru, India’s first prime minister. This gave India access to more advanced conventional weapons than its geopolitical rivals Pakistan and China. What kept Delhi in check was Indira Gandhi’s own cautious leadership style. It didn’t help that the armed forces, numbering 1.1 million, were in a bit of a shambles. Though led by talented officers, the institution was a strange match of the high-tech and obsolescent.

Unlike the mechanised armies of NATO and the Warsaw Pact, India’s vaunted military was caught in a strange flux. Much of its soldiers’ kit was of World War II vintage, and automatic rifles like the SLR were only just beginning to be standardised. The air force flew impressive MiG-21s and Su-7 bombers on questionable air fields. The pride of the navy was a hand-me-down British aircraft carrier, renamed the INS Vikrant. It’s worth noting that neither India nor

Pakistan possessed nuclear weapons in 1971, and nuclear conflict was never a threat.

But Delhi had to act. The intelligence coming out of Bangladesh was appalling. With the Mukti Bahini’s resistance in disarray, Pakistani atrocities continued unchecked. Almost every testimony from Bengali refugees described frightful scenes of carnage and rapine. Worse, there was growing evidence that the atrocities had a darker aspect: an unchecked epidemic of rape as Pakistani soldiers terrorised Muslim and Hindu Bengali women on a huge scale.

The civil war’s outcome needed to be decided soon. Several million refugees inhabited makeshift camps in Indian states like Assam, West Bengal, Meghalaya and Tripura, raising the spectre of mass starvation and local riots. Yet the fate of Bangladesh required a viable grand strategy. Delhi had to decide if it made sense to try and rearrange the balance of power in South Asia.

Indira Gandhi, who was one of the most powerful women in the world at the time, knew the risks posed by instigating a war. Disliked in Washington – both President Richard Nixon and his vizier Henry Kissinger detested her – and considered an arch foe by Mao Zedong in China, Delhi’s worst case scenario was for the Chinese to suddenly break out of the Tibetan plateau and swarm into Bangladesh to assist the Pakistanis. This possibility, coupled with a second front against West Pakistan, was even less appealing if any form of American intervention was factored in.

Preparation was key, and despite her lukewarm relationship with India’s armed forces, Indira Gandhi’s greatest assets were a collection of superb generals, foremost among them the eccentric General Sam Manekshaw.

As a product of the old school, Manekshaw still carried himself with characteristic British swagger and maintained an immaculate moustache to go with a spotless uniform. He

was army chief of staff in 1971 and relished the idea of beating the Pakistanis six years after the 1965 conflict.

Indira Gandhi visited the miserable refugee camps in May and returned to her capital shaken by what she saw. Clandestine support for the Mukti Bahini was expanded, and on 9 August diplomats from Delhi and Moscow hammered out the Indo-Soviet Treaty.

From then on it was the responsibility of Manekshaw and his staff to prepare for a blitz on Bangladesh. Owing to sub-par logistics and the local terrain, months were eaten up massing the requisite forces. By November these included an armoured division, six infantry divisions and an elite parachute brigade. The Indian Navy was in on the action too: its warships and submarines were poised to blockade the poorly defended coastline of Bangladesh. To conceal this build up, Indira Gandhi visited half a dozen foreign capitals, raising awareness for the millions of Bengali refugees in her country. India believed in peace, she insisted, and wouldn’t be responsible for a world war.

The plan conceived by Manekshaw and his staff was a combined arms offensive of awe-inspiring scale. Its goals were to encircle and smash the Pakistani garrisons within Bangladesh in record time and clear the way for the capture of Dhaka, a task reserved for Lieutenant General Jagjit Singh Aurora’s tanks. But first, an irrefutable *casus belli* was needed. The Pakistanis had to strike first and justify a massive counter-attack. A provocation was in order.

IN PART TWO...

India commences its armed intervention, and Bangladesh’s guerrillas begin their campaign. History of War issue 49 is on sale 30 November 2017.

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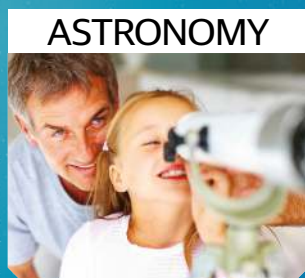
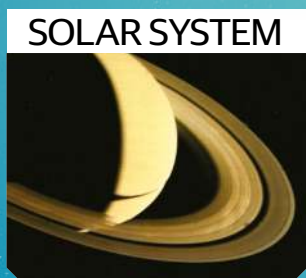


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REVIEWS

Our pick of the latest military history books

SIEGE AT JADOTVILLE
— THE IRISH ARMY'S FORGOTTEN BATTLE —**Author:** Declan Power **Publisher:** Maverick House **Price:** £7.99 (Paperback: Amazon)

THIS BOOK ABOUT THE 1961 IRISH UN SIEGE IN THE CONGO WAS ADAPTED INTO A RECENT NETFLIX FILM AND IS A STIRRING ACCOUNT OF HEROISM AND COMPLEX COLD WAR POLITICS

Siege at Jadotville tells the story of the 156 Irish Army UN peacekeepers of A Company, 35th Battalion, who were deployed to protect the inhabitants of the Congolese mining town of Jadotville in September 1961.

At the height of the Cold War the United Nations militarily intervened in a violently political maelstrom in the Congo that had serious geopolitical implications. It was in this context that the inexperienced troops of A Company arrived in Jadotville, led by Commandant Pat Quinlan. Within days of their deployment the Irish troops became outnumbered by thousands of Katangese militiamen and European mercenaries. Over the course of five days A Company inflicted hundreds of casualties without suffering a single loss. However, they received inadequate support from the UN high command and Quinlan, despite his formidable tactical skills, was forced into a reluctant ceasefire and surrender.

Thanks to a subsequent cover-up by both the UN and the Irish army the heroic actions of the garrison were forgotten for decades. But since the early 2000s Jadotville has been steadily brought into the spotlight and Power's work has been crucial in raising awareness. The book was adapted in 2016 into the Netflix film *The Siege of Jadotville* starring Jamie Dornan as Pat Quinlan, and it is arguable that the events of 1961 have never been more famous thanks to the book and subsequent film.

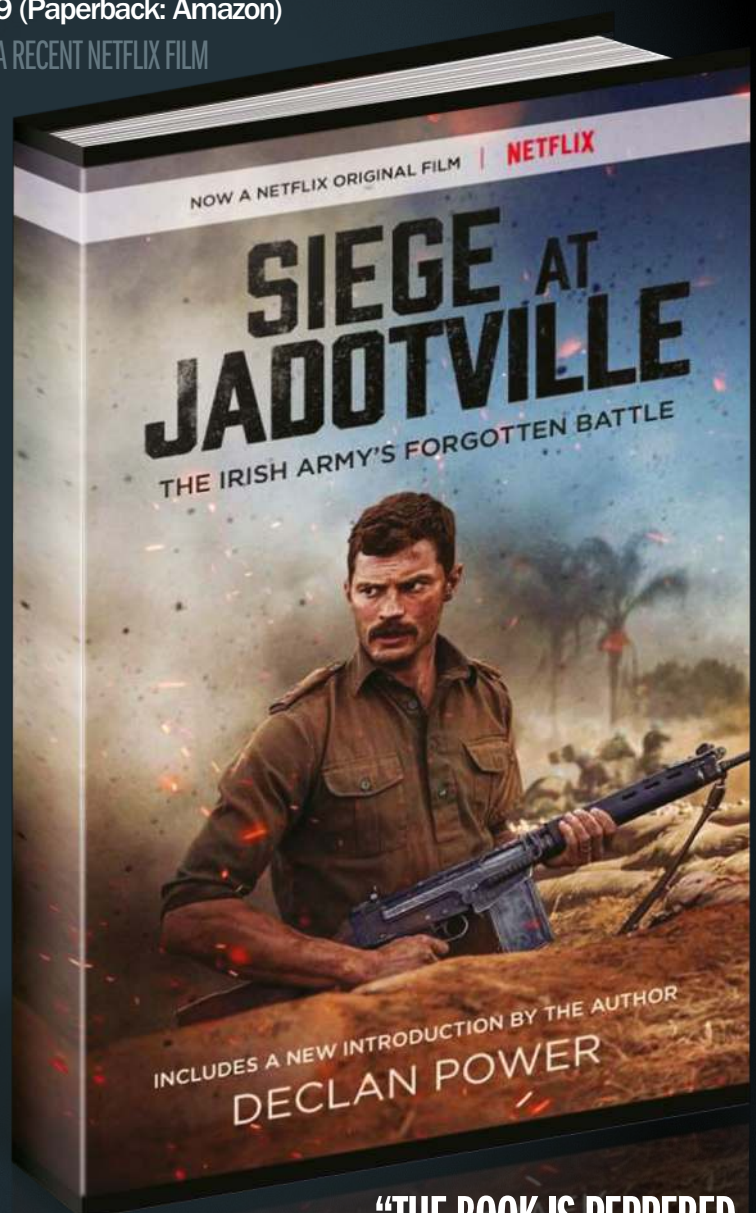
It is not hard to see why. Power, himself a former career soldier in the Irish army, has written an extremely readable account that admirably deconstructs the complexities of the Congo Crisis without losing the pure heroics of the siege itself.

Power rightly emphasises just how serious the situation in the Congo was during the Cold War, even though contemporary events such as the Berlin Wall and Cuban Missile Crisis became far more famous. Equally, the condition of the UN and Irish army at that time is also fascinating and shocking. Both institutions were relatively new and inexperienced, and in the case of the Irish army it had barely developed from its rebel beginnings during the War of Independence and Civil War of the 1920s.

Such is the detail of Power's research and his prolific use of veteran testimonies that the events of the siege itself can be recalled and explained at great length almost hour by hour. The book is peppered with interesting statistics and anecdotes to build a very strong narrative.

Additionally, there are excellent sections on the aftermath of the siege both militarily and politically. The political fallout is better known, but Power also highlights that members of A Company led by Quinlan won a satisfying victory against Katangan gendarmeries and mercenaries in Elisabethville in December 1961.

Overall, Power demonstrates that the tough experiences in the Congo proved to be the catalyst for the Irish army's maturity into a small but highly professional peacekeeping force. However, the men who served at Jadotville itself always remain prominent, and perhaps the greatest achievement of the book is to leave the reader in no doubt that the men of A Company were unjustly maligned heroes.



“THE BOOK IS PEPPERED WITH INTERESTING STATISTICS AND ANECDOTES TO BUILD A VERY STRONG NARRATIVE”

CAMP 21 COMRIE POWs AND POST-WAR STORIES FROM CULTYBRAGGAN

Author: Valerie Campbell **Publisher:** Whittles Publishing **Price:** £16.99

CAMP 21, BASED AT COMRIE IN PERTHSIRE, HAS A RICH HISTORY THAT CONTINUES TODAY THANKS TO ITS STATUS AS THE BEST-PRESERVED PRISONER-OF-WAR CAMP IN BRITAIN AND A VALUED TOURIST ATTRACTION

Also known as Cultybraggan, the camp is situated in an area of high seismic activity – Comrie is also known by the colourful name ‘Shaky Toon’. The camp was constructed in the summer of 1941 and was originally intended to be a training facility, but a surge in prisoner numbers in 1943 from the North African theatre led to its conversion to a POW camp. A similar influx of prisoners would also swell the number of inmates following the Normandy landings in 1944.

Valerie Campbell has tackled the job of putting together a history of the site, focusing not only on the POW period but also on its function during the Cold War. Most people, I suspect, will be very interested in the stories of wartime prisoners, and the book devotes most of its pages to their tales.

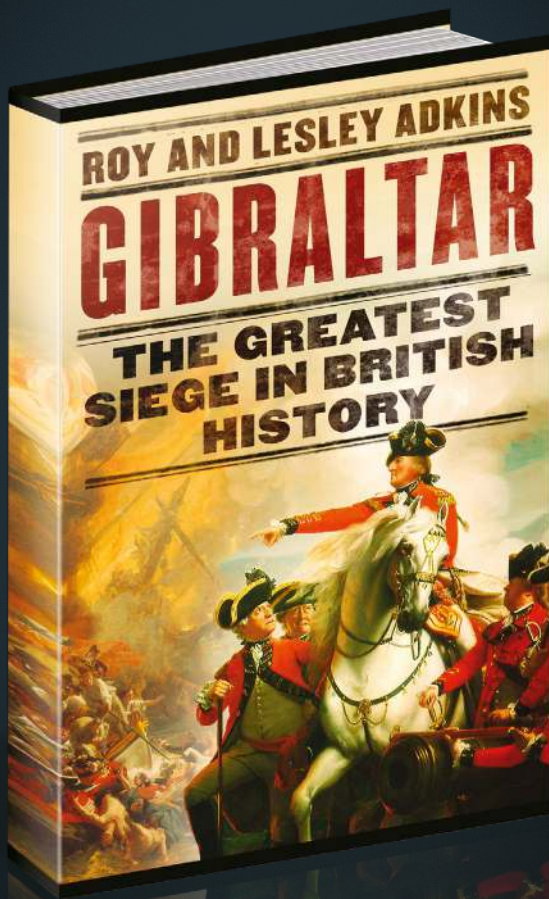
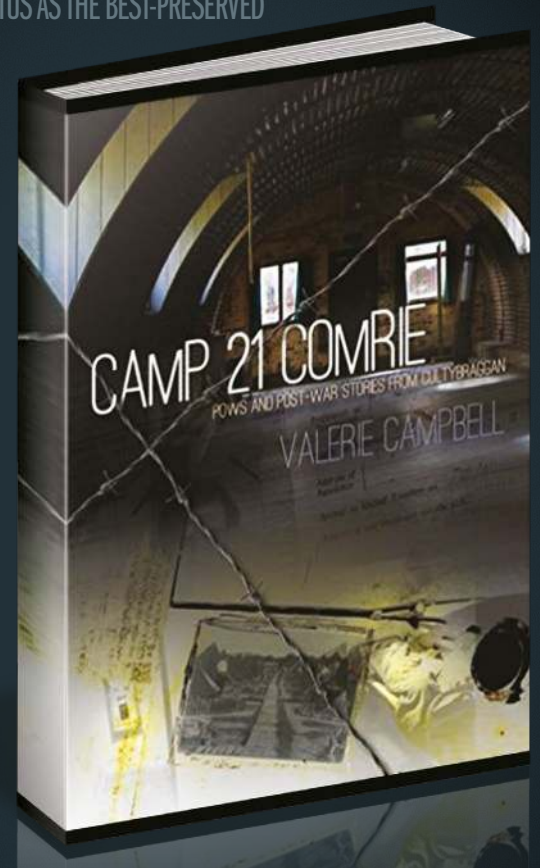
There is plenty of information in this book, with an especially strong chapter on the provision of education and re-education for the mostly German prisoners. Life inside the camp is often brought to life with telling insights. Despite a decent library, for instance, it was difficult for prisoners to read due to the tremendous din inside the corrugated iron Nissen huts. A shortage of cigarettes, meanwhile, led to prisoners improvising with dried tealeaves and handmade pipes, so the huts were filled with noxious smoke as well as noise.

Perhaps unfortunately (everyone loves a good escape story) the prisoners at Camp 21 were

not particularly motivated to get away. The harsh Scottish landscape acted as a deterrent, and most of the prisoners were content to sit out the remainder of the war. There was drama, however, especially in a string of deaths, which the author investigates here.

Despite the great amount of research that has clearly been undertaken, there is a sense that the book is sometimes merely presenting facts rather than weaving them into a coherent narrative. Figures on POW numbers and the detailing of the populations of each of the various compounds within the camp are regularly recited, as are details of the ‘teachers’ offering classes at various points. Reports from camp inspections are clearly a valuable resource, but presenting them as little more than lists of facts and figures can make for dry reading at times.

Digressions also serve to distract the reader from the main subject of the book. The strongest chapter, ‘A Soldier’s Story’, dealing with the experiences at Camp 21 of Rolf Weitzel, also includes great detail on his wartime service, which is interesting in its own right but not relevant to a study of Camp 21. Likewise, a fascinating chapter on Rudolph Hess teases the reader, before the killjoy statement, “He was not, at any point, held at the Comrie camp” is dropped in, begging the question of why his story was included in such detail.



GIBRALTAR THE GREATEST SIEGE IN BRITISH HISTORY

Author: Roy and Lesley Adkins **Publisher:** Little, Brown **Price:** £20

THE STORY OF HOW A BRITISH GARRISON HELD OUT AGAINST FRENCH AND SPANISH OPPONENTS FOR MORE THAN THREE AND A HALF YEARS

The siege of Gibraltar has been largely neglected by historians. There were more exciting things going on elsewhere in the world at the time. The American War of Independence (of which the siege of Gibraltar was technically a part) was entering its second phase as the British switched their attention to the southern colonies, while war between Britain and France had broken out once more and promised to leave even the American conflict in the shadows.

Roy and Lesley Adkins have put together a highly readable account of the siege, based on exhaustive research of papers and documents left behind by the people involved. The depth of research allows the reader to be taken directly into the garrison, to experience the growing dread as the siege began to bite and the resourcefulness of both British and Spanish protagonists.

The result is a very personal story. Rather than hovering above events and providing an overview, the reader is taken directly into the action (or sometimes inaction, as lengthy sieges offered plenty of opportunities for boredom).

The writing is first-rate right from the start, when the sinking of the Royal George is recounted in heart-stopping fashion. Three major relief efforts by the Royal Navy are among the high points of the drama, but the ‘Grand Assault’ on 13 September 1782 was the most serious attempt to end the siege. The biggest battle of the War of Independence in terms of men involved was watched by the biggest audience, as 80,000 civilians gathered to enjoy the spectacle.

With plenty of drama to draw upon and an impressive commitment to research, this is a book to delight the military history enthusiast.



Laura Knight's 'Ruby Loftus screwing a Breech-ring', 1943, was later used as the cover image for *Eve in Overalls*

“THE PAMPHLET HIGHLIGHTS WOMEN’S CONTRIBUTION TO THE SECOND WORLD WAR. IT ALSO SHOWS THAT WOMEN WERE CAPABLE AND COMPETENT OF UNDERTAKING JOBS PREVIOUSLY DONE BY MEN”



EVE IN OVERALLS

This restored publication presents the enormous work contribution women made on the Home Front

During World War II women once again stepped into many of the vacant roles left by the men fighting on the frontline, entering factories, farms and other workplaces to contribute to the war effort. Alan Jeffreys, Imperial War Museums' Senior Curator for the Second World War and Mid-20th Century, explains more about *Eve in Overalls*, a propaganda pamphlet originally produced in 1942 and now published by IWM and purchasable via iwmsshop.org.uk.

WHY WAS EVE IN OVERALLS ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN 1942?

Eve in Overalls was published in 1942 under the auspices of the Ministry of Information. One of its key objectives was to inform the public about the war effort. The pamphlet highlights women's contributions to the Second World War. It also shows that women were competent and capable of undertaking jobs previously done by men.

WHAT DOES THE ORIGINAL MINISTRY OF INFORMATION TEXT TELL US ABOUT ATTITUDES TOWARDS TRADITIONAL GENDER ROLES AND WOMEN'S NEW ROLES ON THE HOME FRONT IN PARTICULAR?

The pamphlet reinforces some of the old stereotypes of gender with the use of the word 'Eve' and stating that women in the workplace were viewed with curiosity and fascination. It is a product of the period, albeit in old-fashioned

terms even for the time. However, it also demonstrates the "tranquil heroism" of women "invading every sphere" of the workplace.

WOMEN ALSO TOOK ON MANY TRADITIONAL MALE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES DURING WWI. WHAT HAD CHANGED, OR NOT CHANGED, DURING THE INTER-WAR YEARS?

In the inter-war period there was initially an increasing number of women employed in clerical and secretarial positions, as well as shop assistants. However, as the economic situation worsened in the 1920s there was a return to the pre-war situation. In 1921 under 31 per cent of women were in employment as compared to 32 per cent in 1911.

IS THE CRUCIAL ROLE THAT WOMEN PLAYED STILL UNDER-APPRECIATED TO THIS DAY?

The role of women during the war has not been forgotten, with books published such as *Millions Like Us: Women's Lives during the Second World War* (2012) by Virginia Nicholson emanating the wartime propagandist film of the same name, *Millions Like Us* (1943) about women working in an aircraft factory. Similarly, the recent film *Their Finest* (2017) tells the story of the fictional character Catrin Cole writing a film script for a Ministry of Information film about the evacuation of Dunkirk during the London Blitz. Perhaps what is forgotten is the scale of women involved in the war effort, which numbered over 10 million.

"Eve in Khaki - Two W.R.N.S. training to be Wireless Telegraphists at a Naval Establishment, where Morse is automatically written on tapes at 200 to 300 words per minute"



© IWM (A 4776)



"Modern dairymaid - After the hard preparatory work of the winter months, the Land Army girls enjoy making a haystack in the summer sunshine."

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EVE IN OVERALLS



© IWM (D 5714)



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Clockwise from above:

"Penelope mechanised - The girl drivers are expected to keep their vehicles in first-class running conditions"

"Most of the London buses now carry women conductresses. Here is one of them checking over the day's schedule with her driver at the depot"

"These women are milling the jacket of a jim, vast numbers of which are being turned out at this factory"

"Britain's Balloon Barage defence is one of the toughest jobs that the W.A.A.F. have taken on"



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WIN THE BATTLE OF ALGIERS

Re-release on Blu-ray

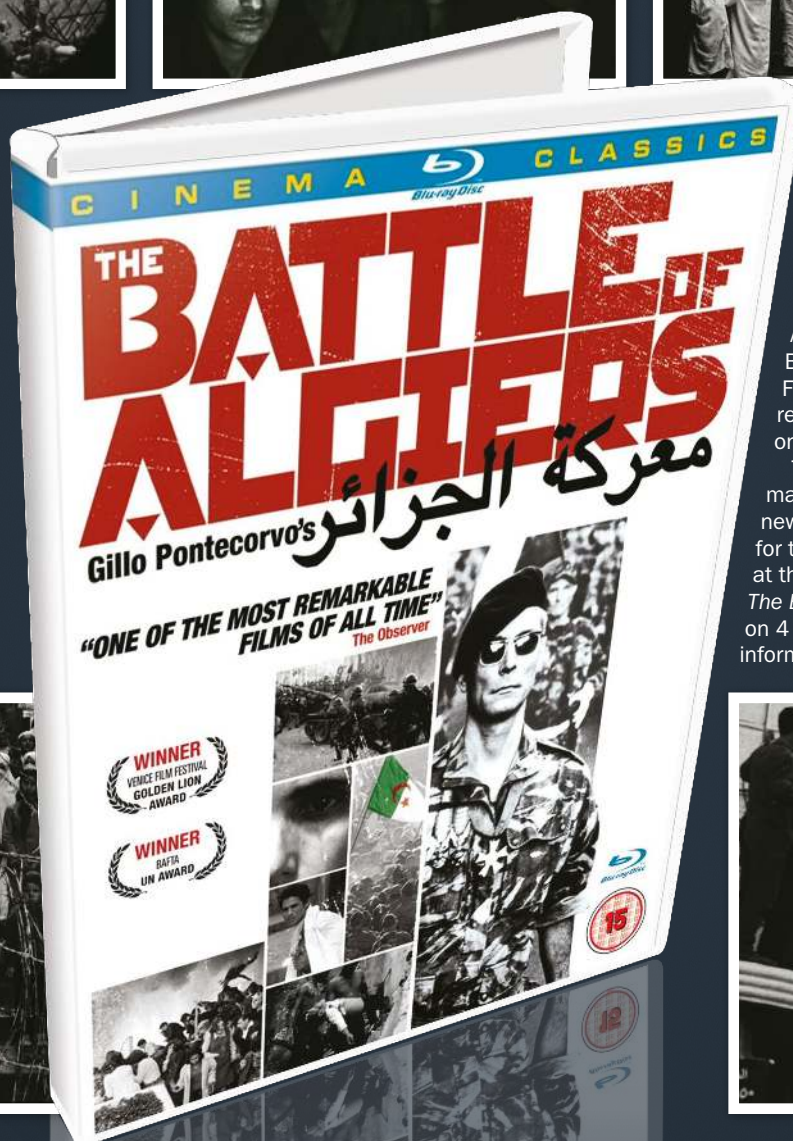
The revered and influential film on the Algerian War has been digitally re-mastered and restored



Since its release in 1966 *The Battle of Algiers* has long been critically hailed as a masterpiece of world cinema and one of the greatest historical war films ever made.

Directed by Italian filmmaker Gillo Pontecorvo and hauntingly scored by maestro composer Ennio Morricone, the film recreates the Algerian struggle for independence from French occupation between 1954-62 and became highly notable for the way it depicted brutal acts on both sides of the conflict.

Amateur actors were used in the cast, including Algerian activists like Saadi Yacef, that added to the film's heightened sense of realism.



Even today, the film is used by military organisations such as the Pentagon to offer insights into guerrilla strategy and the effects of foreign occupation.

The Battle of Algiers won the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival, was nominated for three Academy Awards (Best Director, Best Original Screenplay and Best Foreign Picture) and is now to be re-released in a new 4K restoration on UK Blu-ray.

The film has been digitally re-mastered to preserve its grainy, newsreel look and was nominated for the Best Restored Version Award at the 2016 Venice Film Festival. *The Battle For Algiers* will be released on 4 December 2017 – for more information visit: www.cultfilms.co.uk



FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN A COPY OF THE BATTLE OF ALGIERS VISIT:
WWW.HISTORYANSWERS.CO.UK

Competition closes at 00:00 GMT on Wednesday 29 November 2017. By taking part in this competition you agree to be bound by these terms and conditions and the Competition Rules: www.futuretcs.com. Entries must be made on the official entry form and be received by 00:00GMT on 29/11/2017. Open to all UK residents aged 18 years or over. The winner will be drawn at random from all valid entries received, and shall be notified by email or telephone. The prize is non-transferable and non-refundable. There is no cash alternative.

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Image: Getty

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NAZI

BALL TANK

This unique German armoured vehicle is an obscure and mysterious piece of military technology

World War II was an extremely innovative period for military technology – from the invention of atomic weapons, computers and jet fighters, right down to jerry cans and dynamo-powered torches. Nevertheless, the desperate need for ingenious hardware occasionally produced bizarre pieces of equipment, and arguably none is more strange or enigmatic than the German ‘Kugelpanzer’.

This unique tank was captured by the Red Army in Manchuria in 1945, although nobody

knows why it was there. One theory is that it was sent to Japan as part of a technology-sharing scheme with Nazi Germany, but nothing is known for certain.

The tank’s design and purpose is equally baffling. Rolling or ‘ball’ tanks had their obscure origins during World War I when the Germans designed – but never built – a unique armoured vehicle that could traverse the obstacles of No Man’s Land more effectively. By World War II this idea had been developed into a working model.

The Kugelpanzer (literally “ball tank”) has two large ‘hemisphere’ wheels and a small rear

steering wheel and is powered by a single cylinder two-stroke engine producing a top speed of 8 kilometres per hour. The single crewman was protected by 5mm armour and an MG 34 or 42.

Consequently it is believed that the Kugelpanzer was not intended to be a vehicle for offensive deployment, except perhaps for infantry support. Instead, other purposes have been proposed, including reconnaissance, cable laying or artillery spotting. Ultimately, whatever its purpose, the pictured tank was probably never used in combat and is more than likely the only one of its kind in existence.

“THIS UNIQUE TANK WAS CAPTURED BY THE RED ARMY IN MANCHURIA IN 1945, ALTHOUGH NOBODY KNOWS WHY IT WAS THERE”

The Kugelpanzer is displayed in Kubinka Tank Museum, Russia, and its design secrets are still locked away in Russian archives



W. Britain

World War II



ABOVE: B25059 German 88mm Flak 36, Dual Purpose Gun with 3 Man Crew, 14 Piece Set, Limited Edition of 300 sets



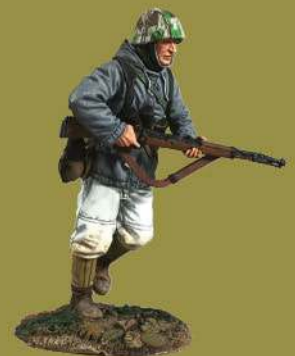
B25048 German Volksgrenadier
Walking with K-98
1 Piece Set



B25053 German Fallschirmjäger
with K-98 No.2
1 Piece Set



B25054 German Fallschirmjäger
Feldgendarmerie Directing Traffic
1 Piece Set



B25062 German Volksgrenadier
In Parka Running with K-98, No.1
1 Piece Set

All figures shown above from the W. Britain range can be pre-ordered from the retailers listed below:

MKL Models

www.mklmailorder.co.uk

McLaren Models

www.mclaren-models.com

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Scott's Models

www.scottsmodels.co.uk

Magpie (Manchester House)

www.magpieantiques.co.uk

Arcadia International Models

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1:30 Scale

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Model, Collect & Create

KING & COUNTRY'S

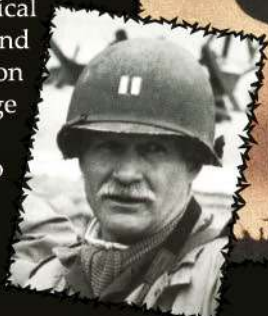
"SAVING PRIVATE RYAN" was a 1998 WW2 movie set during the Normandy Invasion of June 1944. Directed by *Steven Spielberg* it depicted a squad of U.S. Army 'Rangers' tasked with finding the lone surviving brother (of four) who is an American paratrooper somewhere behind the German lines in Normandy.

When released it won great critical and public acclaim for its realistic and grim depiction of men at war. It went on to win 5 *Academy Awards* and was a huge success all over the world.

It also inspired King & Country to begin its D.DAY series of soldiers and fighting vehicles... "NORMANDY'44".



Courtesy of Dreamworks LLC and Paramount Pictures.



THIS ALL-NEW EDITION

Next year will be the 20th Anniversary of this great movie... and a great King & Country D.DAY collection!

To celebrate, we are 'revisiting' the movie and the real heroes who inspired it with **TWO** sets of 4 figures each.

SET#1 portrays a 'Ranger' captain together with his BAR man, a rifleman and a corporal 'translator' as they move cautiously through the Normandy 'bocage'.

SET#2 adds on a 'Ranger' sergeant followed by a marksman / sniper, a 'medic' and one more 'Ranger' rifleman.

DD306



'Searching for Pvt. Ryan'

KING & COUNTRY'S CONNECTION

Back in the year 2000, King & Country's cofounder and creative director, *Andy C. Neilson* met and

DD305



became friends with *Capt. Dale Dye*, the military advisor on "Saving Private Ryan" and many other major war films and television series.

Andy presented Capt. Dye with the first 2 x sets of K&C D.DAY figures... U.S. Army Rangers and Airborne Paratroopers directly inspired by the movie ... and *Capt. Dye's* work on it.

Thus began a long friendship that continues to this day.

Together they make a fine-looking squad... tough, battle hardened and men on a mission.

SEARCHING FOR WHO ...?

A follow-up release of the paratrooper they are searching for is already 'in the works' along with other figures and vehicles inspired by the movie and the actual events of June 1944.

Look out for them!

KING & COUNTRY AUTHENTIC HAND-MADE HISTORY

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